COMPROMISES, COMPENSATIONS AND COLONIAL DIVISION IN SEAMUS HEANEY'S POETRY

ABSTRACT OF THESIS

SUBMITTED FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF

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Abstract

The advent of postcolonialism has resulted in significant changes in literature and culture around the world. The publication of Edward Said's epoch making oeuvre *Orientalism* (1978), Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), Homi Bhabha's *Nation and Narration* (1980) and Helen Tiffin, Gareth Griffiths and Bill Ashcroft's *The Empire Writes Back* (1989) have changed the shape of literary studies. Postcolonialism, since then, has allowed an extensive range of investigation into the relations of power in various contexts. It explores the creation of empire and its colonial impact on the history, economy, culture and other cultural production of colonized society such as language, identity, race and gender. There have been substantial arguments over specific domains and definitions of postcolonialism. In a general sense, postcolonialism investigates the interaction between European nations and the countries they colonized. Postcolonialism attempts to achieve decolonisation of native traditions, culture, language, etc. which are lost in the colonial fabrication. It serves both as a struggle for freedom and the redefinition of new identities.

In the postcolonial world colours are regarded not just as strokes of fashion- white has more negative connotations than positive-it is laden with the sense of supremacy. The governing pattern in the hegemony of divisions in the British Empire is the dichotomy of black / white as it was the case in the colonizations of Caribbean countries and the Indian subcontinent. The superiority of White identities were imposed on the Blacks and Browns, the racial 'other' of the White complexions. However, in the case of Ireland it has negligible importance. The Irish share the skin colour with the British and once shared the same religion. Before the advent of Reformation in 16th century, the English, like Irish were Catholics. The national identity of the Irish was now also infused with a religious identity and the Irish Catholics became the newly constituted 'other', in conformity to Protestantism, both in Britain and Europe. The colonization of Ireland raises many exigent questions about the ideologies and discourses which form the framework of the contemporary cultural theories.

The issues of language, identity and history take central positions in postcolonial criticism. The construction of identity is a complex phenomenon. In Ireland the construction of racial and individual identities was a consequence of colonial expansion. British colonizers stripped the Irish people of their native identities and oppressed the natives in order to reconstruct their identities. Thus, identity is a product of history and culture. The age-old colonialism and the successive colonial discourses deprived the Irish people of their capacity to reconstruct their own identities. There have been differences in the versions of history written by the colonizers and colonized. The re-writing of history with the advent of postcolonialism, gives the writers an opportunity to deconstruct the hegemony. The postcolonial theory examines and analyses representations and construction of identities of the colonized in literary, cultural and historical texts. The theory also provides detailed method for researching the various strategies of power, domination and hegemony used by the colonizers. It also uncovers the ideological undertone of divisions, otherness, stereotyping and power affairs of the dominant.

Seamus Heaney hails from Ireland, a country torn by colonial strife, as well as by religious and political conflicts for centuries for centuries. Heaney's poetry mirrors the plight of the marginalized Irish people and the impact of colonization on the culture, traditions, identity, language and economy of Northern Ireland and throws into relief the attitude of hegemonic societies. His negotiations are based on the binaries of metropolis/periphery, self/other, colonizer/colonized, England/Ireland. The major impact of centuries of colonizations in Ireland has been the dislocation of Irish identity. Despite the noble veil of cultural and moral missions, one of the basic motives of colonial enterprise is economic exploitation. Heaney's poetry has the objective of rehabilitating culture and traditions, manners and morals, language and identity and history and politics of Northern Ireland. His negotiations are pleas for reconciliations and peace. Heaney deconstructs Irish anxieties and preoccupations from a universal perspective. He identifies common metaphors that interrogate the compromises and the compensations of all colonized people and also the impact of these negotiations on the colonizers.

Heaney analyzes the intricacies of the marginalization strategies of the colonizers. The impact of colonization on the world was always a complex process that took many forms. The suffering and loss of life was on an immeasurable scale. The sense of cultural dislocation, alienation and disintegration of rural life was a result of industrialization which colonialism had brought with it under the veil of a civilization mission. Heaney strives against the fragmentation of rural identity. Identity is a product of history and, on a personal level, of memory. The identity of rural Irish people was fractured by colonization. The identity of 'colonized' was imposed on them. The inheritances of loss, sense of living in a cultural vacuum are common feelings shared by all the colonized people of the world. Culture is entangled with history. So, too, is literature. Writers have registered the events of colonization from its very advent. Heaney shares the feeling of suppression. With his umbilical cord still attached to the traditional rural world and Celtic Christianity, the poetic consciousness of Heaney seems deeply embedded in nostalgia. He laments the losses and subsequent changes and he longs for a peaceful Ireland. He deals with thousands of people and is sensitive to each one. The canvas of his poetry is crowded with people from different strata of life and society.

Memory and imagination, for Heaney, are compensatory faculties through which he converts absence into presence, cultural vacuum and fragmented selves into consolidated identities. He sees himself as the custodian and the celebrant of a lost culture, forgotten history and diminishing heritage. Heaney deals with a wide spectrum of themes. His poems are marked with the awareness of relationships between the personal, the political and the historical. He evokes his Irish identity with different strategies and writes back against the dominant discourse. The allusion to myths and history and local Irish places are some of the over powering concerns of his poetry. He registers intimacy with Irish people and places. The familiar and filial occupy special places in his poetry.

The educational empowerment of Irish people attracts Heaney's attention. He believes that the power of education will change the condition of Ireland. He emphasizes proper supervision for the children. The theme of ruined childhood and its compensation through education and supervision is dealt with thoroughly in his works. Heaney's poetry

is the 'poetry of visions'. He believes that vision is the foundation of some of the concrete realities of the world. He has visions of a better Ireland and a healthy world. He believes in humanism as a necessary component. He returns to his roots to revive society. Seamus Heaney's poetry is for the promotion of causes he believes in. The present world of uncertainties evokes mixed responses in the poet's psyche. On the one hand he feels that scientific progress and globalization have turned the world into a neighbourhood and on the other hand he feels unhappy about the circumstances that have remained unchanged since prehistoric times. The poet is poignantly aware of his responsibility. Earlier Heaney focused on the violence and plight of Ireland but in later poetry he has gone global with a vision of peace, love and harmony. It seems that the conferment of the Nobel Prize in 1995 made him conscious of greater responsibilities and widened the horizon of his poetry. He steps out of his national consciousness and treats the entire world as his arena. The influences, intertextualities and translations widen the dimension of Heaney's poetry. He compromises with influences to widen the domain of Irish literature.

Heaney deals with a number of people with handicaps. He deals with this less explored field in literature. He shows how these physically challenged people become the 'other' of the society because of the indifference of people. He also appreciates the will power and uncompromising courage of the people who stand out against all the odds with their own identity in the faceless, numberless crowd. Heaney pleads for the revival of a value-based vision which will encompass all humanity. The 'others' of the society may be physically challenged people, women, the people from the lower strata of society, unlettered rustics or the colonized natives. His endeavour is to compensate for the wrongs done to these people through his poetry.

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Ref. No.....

Dated...17/4/08...

This is to certify that Mr. Haris Qadeer has completed his thesis entitled *Compromises, Compensations and Colonial Division in Seamus Heaney's Poetry* under my supervision. To the best of my knowledge this is his original work.

Seemin Hasan

Dr. Seemin Hasan

Supervisor

In this work when it shall be found that much is omitted,

Let it not be forgotten that much likewise is performed

---Samuel Johnson, Preface to his Dictionary

...Dedicated to all mentally and physically

challenged children

and

silenced subalterns to whom Heaney's poetry lends

a voice... 

Seamus Heaney

"...I credit poetry for making this space-walk possible. I credit it immediately because of a line I wrote fairly recently encountering myself (and whoso ever else might be listening) to 'walk on air against your better judgment'. But I credit it ultimately because poetry can make an order as true to the impact of external reality and as sensitive to the inner laws of poet's being as ripples that rippled in and rippled out across the water..."

Seamus Heaney, Nobel Lecture, 'Crediting Poetry', 1995.

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Thank God for the slow loadening:
When I hold you now
We are close and deep
As the atmosphere on water.

-Seamus Heaney
The Otter, *Field Work*.

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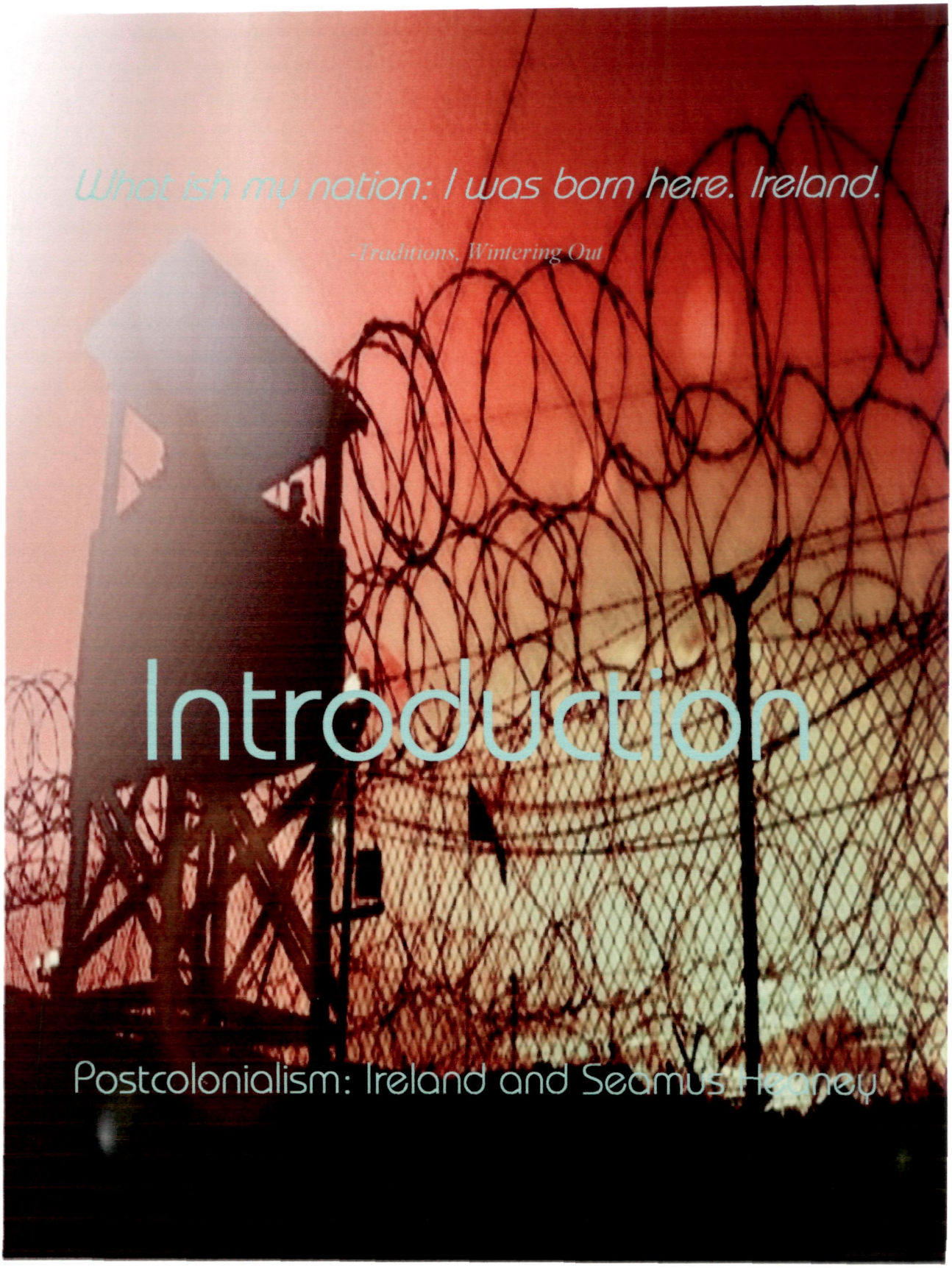
There were others without whose help I could not have completed this thesis. Although I can not thank them all individually, they all are part of my memory and an indispensable part of my highest academic achievement. For all of them I can but echo:

Thanks to the human heart by which we live
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, its fears,
To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie to deep for tears

William Wordsworth
Ode on Intimations of Immortality, XI (ll- 200-204).

Dated: 3rd April 2008.

Haris Qadeer


What ish my nation: I was born here. Ireland.
-Traditions, Wintering Out
Introduction
Postcolonialism: Ireland and Seamus Heaney

Introduction

The advent of postcolonialism has resulted in significant changes in literature and culture around the world. The publication of Edward Said's epoch making oeuvre *Orientalism* (1978), Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), Homi Bhabha's *Nation and Narration* (1980) and Helen Tiffin, Gareth Griffiths and Bill Ashcroft's *The Empire Writes Back* (1989) have changed the shape of literary studies. Said's book is a critique of Eurocentrism and Western constructions of the Orient. Postcolonialism analyses and scrutinizes the aftermath of colonization and its impact on new communities. Said's book initiated an attack on the Western vision of Asian (specially the Middle East) and African societies. *Orientalism* is a Eurocentric concept for governing, dominating and restructuring the subaltern societies. Said suggests that such works were bound up with the route by which Europeans had sought to operate hegemony over other races and cultures. He argues:

> Can one divide human reality, as indeed human reality seems to be genuinely divided, into clearly different cultures, histories, traditions, societies, even races, and survive the consequences humanely?. By surviving the consequences humanly, I mean to ask whether there is any way of avoiding the hostility expressed by the division, say, of men into "us" (Westerners) and "they" (Orientals).[1]

Postcolonialism, since then, has allowed an extensive range of investigation into the relations of power in various contexts. It explores the creation of empire and its colonial impact on the history, economy, culture and other cultural production of colonized society such as language, identity, race and gender. There have been substantial arguments over specific domains and definitions of postcolonialism. In a general sense, postcolonialism investigates the interaction between European nations and the countries they colonized. The term postcolonial incorporates colonized nations that have yet to achieve independence and also the minorities of the First World. It can even extend to independent colonies that now contend with the neocolonial forms of marginalization through capitalism and globalization. Steven Barfield and Ian Foakes defines the term postcolonial:

> Postcolonial, then, suggests less a socio-geographic entity and more the processes of historical dialogue and intervention. Writers from the formerly colonized countries are not viewed as simply finding a voice of their own but doing so from within history, where the voices of their peoples were silenced and marginalized by the imposition of colonial rule.[2]

Postcolonialism attempts to achieve decolonisation of native traditions, culture, language, etc. which are lost in the colonial fabrication. It serves both as a struggle for freedom and the redefinition of new identities. The major postcolonial geographical areas include regions such as Caribbean, South East Asia, Africa, Canada, and Australia and Ireland. Irish writers like Oscar Wilde, G.B Shaw, W.B Yeats, James Joyce and Seamus Heaney are considered both as postcolonial writers and also as main stream of English writers. The Government of Ireland Act was introduced in 1920 in which Ireland was divided with the introduction of two parliaments- one in Dublin to serve twenty-six counties and other in Belfast to serve six northern counties. The twenty-six counties were given the status of free states known as Irish Free State whereas the Empire claimed jurisdiction over six northern counties. The population of Ireland was divided into Unionists (those who want to remain a part of United Kingdom) and Republicanists (those who want the entire Ireland to be a free and independent country) on the issue of division. The partition was legalized with Irish Free State Treaty on 6th December 1921. The Provisional Government eventually put down the violence that erupted between the Free State soldiers and Irregulars. On 21st December 1948, The Irish Free State was given full independence from the United Kingdom under the term of the Republic of Ireland Act. However, the six northern counties, known as Northern Ireland, remained a part of United Kingdom.

The re-interpretation and re-writing of the histories, from the postcolonial perspective, along a binary axis of the colonized and colonizer would endorse one of Fanon's psychoanalytic theories that the injured psyche of the colonized people mirrors the desires of the colonizer, which serves to reinforce the need for interpretations to include the various histories and imbalances of power. Fanon's assumptions hold significance when considering Seamus Heaney's choice of subject matter in his poetry.

Fanon suggests the use of pre-colonial past as a tool of resistance and struggle against the dominance of hegemonic culture. Fanon remarked:

> ...passionate search for a national culture which existed before the colonial era finds its legitimate reason in the anxiety shared by native intellectuals to shrink away from the Western culture in which they all risk being swamped. Because they realize that they are in danger of losing their lives and thus becoming lost to their people, these men...relentlessly determine to renew contact with the oldest and most pre-colonial spring of life.[3]

Heaney revives and uses Irish legends, associates himself with the rural environs, used the Irish tradition of '*dinnseanchas*', as the signifier of invigorated contemporary national culture. Heaney's oeuvre is crowded with the sagas of exploitation of legends and mythological wars and divisions. He celebrates the past and endows it with 'dignity, glory and solemnity'[4], as an endeavour to dismantle the hegemonic portrayal of Ireland. Heaney's attempt at deconstruction of hegemony and restoration of Irish culture and identity mirrors Fanon's theories. Heaney attempts to restore a forgotten culture which was at a tangent to the colonizer's definitions. He tries to rehabilitate a dying language and struggles to restore the voice to the subalterns who have been silenced by the hegemony. Fanon linked the revival of national culture with the struggle for freedom in colonies.

Seamus Heaney's struggle is for all the marginalized peoples of the world in general and the subaltern Irish in particular. The marginalized peoples in general are subjugated by common socio-cultural patterns of restrictions propagated by the hegemony. Seamus Heaney's struggle is for a futuristic vision of the society. The present thesis will explore the compromises which the poet has to make for his vision and the compensation which he demands for the loss incurred through colonial divisions. The postcolonial concerns of Seamus Heaney can be related to the endeavour of postcolonial Indians writers and can be extended to similar struggles of deconstructing and dismantling hegemony by writers of the Third Worlds such as Chinua Achebe, George Lammings, Raja Rao, Ngugi etc.

Seamus Heaney was born on 13th April 1939. He is the first child of Patrick and Margaret Kathleen Heaney, who then lived on a fifty acres farm called Mossbawn, County Derry, Northern Ireland. Heaney was the eldest of nine siblings. He had two sisters and six brothers. After attending the local primary school at Anahorish, he won a scholarship to St. Columb's College in Londonderry. In 1957, he entered Queen's University Belfast, where he had been offered another scholarship for a degree in English Language and Literature. It was during his years at Queen's University that he started to write and between 1959 and 1961 - the year he graduated with first class honours - the university magazines *Q* and *Gorgon* published a handful of his poems as well as a short story. They appeared under the nom-de-plume of 'Incertus'.

The Head of English at Queen's encouraged Heaney to apply to Oxford for postgraduate studies, but he chose to go to St. Joseph College in Belfast to be trained as the profession of school teacher. He worked for a year at St. Thomas's Intermediate School in Belfast. Following this, he was offered lectureship at St. Joseph. There he met the poet and critic, Philip Hobsbaum who arrived recently from England. Hobsbaum, along with Heaney, Michael Longley, Derek Mahon, Stewart Parker and James Simmons formed a literary circle that came to be known as 'The Group'. In 1964, Hobsbaum sent some of the Heaney's poem to his old associate in London who forwarded them to the literary editor of the New Statesman Karl Miller who published three poems- 'Digging', 'Scaffolding' and 'Storm on the Island' in the December issue.

In 1965, Heaney married a school teacher Marie Delvin. His first pamphlet *Eleven Poems* was published in the same year and coincided with the Belfast Festival. He received a numbers of good reviews. In 1966, the London publisher Faber and Faber brought out Heaney's first anthology *Death of a Naturalist*. The book won the Cholmondeley Award, the E.C. Gregory Award, the Somerset Maugham Award and the Geoffrey Faber Memorial Prize. In the same year he resigned from his position at St. Joseph's to take up the lectureship in English back Queen's university.

After the publication of *Door into the Dark* (1969) and *Wintering Out* (1972) Heaney spent an academic year (1970-71) at the University of California, Berkeley and

later he resigned from his job at Queen's and left Northern Ireland to settle in Glanmore, the place which he often refers to in his work. For the next three years, Heaney took up writing as a full-time career and in 1975, when *North* was published; he went to work at Carysfort College in Dublin. *North* won the W.H. Smith Award, the Duff Cooper Memorial Prize and was a Poetry Book Society Choice. After the publication of *Field work* (1979) and *Preoccupations: Selected Prose* (1980), he resigned from the position of Head of English for the visiting professorship at Harvard University.

In 1984 he published Station Island and in the same year was elected Boylston Professor of Rhetoric and Oratory at Harvard. Five years later, after the publication of anthology *The Haw Lantern* (1987) and second collection of essays, *The Government of the Tongue* (1988), he was also elected Professor of Poetry at Oxford. Heaney's greatest literary achievement was the Nobel Prize in 1995 after which he gave up the Boylston Chair but accepted the appointment as the Emerson Poet in Residence. Since than Heaney has shown no sign of slowing down. He has published *The Place of Writings* (1989), *Selected Poems 1966-1987* (1990), *The Redress Of Poetry* (1990), *The Cure at Troy* (1991), *Seeing Things* (1991), *The Spirit Level* (1996), *Opened Ground: Poems 1966-1996* (1998), The Whitbread Prize winner translation of *Beowulf* (1999), *The Diary of One Who Vanished* (1999), *Electric Light* (2001), *Finder Keeper: Selected Prose 1971-2001* (2002) and *District and Circle* (2006).

The central arguments of this study are on 'compromises', 'compensations' and 'colonial divisions'. The literary meanings, as defined by *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary,* are as follows: 'compromise'[5] as a verb, is 'to give up some of your demands after a dispute with somebody, in order to reach an agreement' and the word, as a noun, is 'an agreement made between two people or groups in which each side gives up some of the things they want so that both sides are happy at the end'. Heaney hails from Northern Ireland which is a country torn by colonial, political and communal strives. The thesis will access the colonial, political and religious dimensions of compromises in Heaney's poetry. In dealing with the said dimensions the thesis will focus on the plights of Northern Irish people especially the Catholic minority to which Heaney belongs. Heaney commented:

> The community to which I belong is Catholic and nationalist. I believe that poet's force now, and hopefully in the future, is to maintain the efficacy of his own "mythos", his own cultural and political colourings, rather than to serve any particular strategy that his leaders, his paramilitary organization or his own liberal self might want him to serve. I think that poetry and poetics are, in different ways, an articulation, an ordering, a giving of form to inchoate pieties, prejudices, world-views.[6]

The word 'compensations'[7] means 'something, especially money, that somebody gives you because they have hurt you, or damaged something that your own; the act of giving this to somebody'. As a plural word it usually means 'things that make a bad situation better'. For the present thesis, the second meaning of the word will be taken into consideration in order to investigate the negotiations which Heaney makes with the hegemony. The platform of poetry provides the poet with opportunity of compensations. Heaney credits poetry for the force of life. He believes that poetry has 'its own vindicating force...the tongue (representing both a poet's personal gift of utterance and the common resources of language itself) has been granted the right to govern.'[8] In *The Redress of Poetry* he claims that of 'the redressing effect of poetry comes from its being a glimpsed alternative, a revelation of potential that is denied or constantly threatened by circumstances.'[9] The thesis will explore Heaney's efforts to compensate the Irish people through his poetry. The fracturing of identity, the diminishing rural environs, the dying Irish language and the misrepresentation of Irish in colonial literature are some of postcolonial concerns which occupy Heaney's mind and he finds 'poetry's power to do the things which always is and always will be to poetry's credit; the power to persuade that vulnerable part of our consciousness of its rightness in spite of the wrongness all round it'.[10]

The word 'colonial'[11] as an adjective, refers to 'connected with or belonging to a country that controls another country'. Thus, the divisions created by the colonizers are the 'colonial divisions'. The Catholic sensibilities of the poet and the impact of sectarian violence, or 'Troubles', on the lives of Irish people needs a special mention. Heaney belongs to the Catholic community which is a minority community in Northern Ireland. Prior to the advent of British colonization the original religion of the majority of the people of Ireland was Catholicism. The Protestants came to Ireland as settlers. With the

Map of Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland

Retrieved from http://itraveluk.co.uk/maps/ireland.html on 12 January 2008

division of Ireland, the majority of the Catholic dominated areas went to the Republic of Ireland and the minority remained in Northern Ireland. According to the 2001 census[12], the Catholic population of Northern Ireland is 40.46 percent of the total population. The Troubles consisted of repeated act of intense violence between the nationalist and unionist communities. The Provisional IRA campaign aimed at the termination of British rule from Ireland and the creation of a United Ireland by force of arms and political persuasions. The organization, although, regarded as an illegal terrorist group by United Kingdom, sees itself as a continuation of the IRA (1919-21) that fought in Irish War of Independence. In order to safeguard the unionist domination and British governance, the loyalist forces such as Ulster Volunteer Force and Ulster Defense Association along with the British Army launched their own campaigns against the nationalist population in Northern Ireland.

The origin of division between the Catholics and the Protestants can be traced back to the British colonial Plantation of Ulster in 1609. The lands of the native were confiscated by the British and settled by the Protestant English and Scottish planters. This led to two episodes of religious violence and conflict between the native Catholic planters and the settlers in Ulster Rebellions (October 1641), Massacre of Drogheda (11th September 1649) and Battle of Boyne (1st July 1690). The Protestant dominance over Ireland was claimed by the victory of the British. By 1703, about 90 percent of the land was confiscated by the Protestant nobles and the native peasants had to pay rent to them. The colonizers also imposed Penal Laws in Ireland which curtailed the basic religious, political and legal rights of the natives. During the period of laws the natives were not allowed to carry weapons, to own horses and to buy property, the right to vote was restricted, the natives were also barred from holding public positions, military jobs and legal professions.

The polarization of the two communities increased with the withdrawal of the laws in later part of the 18th century. With the breakdown of these laws the Catholics regained their ability to buy land and enter in trades. The Protestants traders and nobles saw it as competition. As a consequence, the attacks on the Catholic community were increased by the Protestant group 'Peep O' Day Boys'. The Catholics, in return and in

their protection, organized 'The Defenders' in 1790s in Ulster. Although the efforts were made for the reconciliations, ending of sectarian divisions and the formation of free and independent Ireland by many Catholics and Liberal Protestants through the nationalist movement of Society of United Irishmen which was inspired by French Revolution. The movement met a failure with the defeat and suppression of Irish Rebellion of 1798 and the formation of Orange Order (1795) by the government and hardliners Protestants. The abolition of Irish Parliament and unification of Ireland with the United Kingdom through the Act of Union in 1801 made the division more strong. The Irish population was divided into the unionist and nationalist with the introduction of the Act of Union. The indifferent attitude of the British government during the Potato Famine years (1845-47) in which millions of people starved to death filled the Catholics with hatred and anger.

In the postcolonial world colours are regarded not just as strokes of fashion- white has more negative connotations than positive-it is laden with the sense of supremacy. The governing pattern in the hegemony of divisions in the British Empire is the dichotomy of black / white as it was the case in the colonizations of Caribbean countries and the Indian subcontinent. The superiority of White identities were imposed on the Blacks and Browns, the racial 'other' of the White complexions. However, in the case of Ireland it has negligible importance. The Irish share the skin colour with the British and once shared the same religion. Before the advent of Reformation in 16th century, the English, like Irish were Catholics. The national identity of the Irish was now also infused with a religious identity and the Irish Catholics became the newly constituted 'other', in conformity to Protestantism, both in Britain and Europe. The colonization of Ireland raises many exigent questions about the ideologies and discourses which form the framework of the contemporary cultural theories.

British colonization started in 12th century, and as always, was begun, in the guise of providing support to some of the warring tribes. Later it became a vital part of the civilization mission of the Empire. The representation of the natives in the hegemonic records by the agents of monarchy such as in the works of Spenser's *The Present View of State of Ireland* (1598) and Cambrensis's *A Topography of Ireland* (1178) testifies the

noble mission and the subsequent bullying of Irish religious practices and customs. Depictions of the Irish during the Anglo Norman invasion of the 12th and 13th centuries as barbaric, uncivilized and idle, laid the foundations of a stereotype The validation for the mission of saving the Irish, from themselves, was based on conceptions of barbarism, ignorance, paganism and inferiority. This formed the basis of discourses of marginalization and dominated colonial history for many centuries in different colonies of the world. The Irish, despite their whiteness, shared the same status as black people suggesting that their biological attributes had not supported them in the context of racist discourses.

In Heaney's poetry the events of struggles for freedom, the martyrs and the colonial divisions are recurrent. Heaney decolonizes the hegemony by expressing the Irish marginalization and subjugation by the Empire. The Palestinian-American literary critic Edward Said (1935-2003) in his article 'Yeats and Decolonization' argues that Yeats in his works attempts decolonization through the construction of national Irish identity. He also places Yeats in the global anti-imperialist struggle drawing parallel between him and Third World writers and theorists such as Frantz Fanon, Pablo Neruda and Chinua Achebe. Said connects the shared colonial experience of the colonies such as India, South America, Africa and Malaysia with that of Ireland. According to Said's view, 'bog dwellers' are Irish counterpart to 'niggers...babus and wogs'[13]. He also acknowledged the distinct colonization of Ireland with the other colonization by the British Empire. He writes 'It is true that the connections are closer between England and Ireland than between England and India' [14]. Similar tendencies will also be explored in the poetry of Seamus Heaney. He can be regarded as carrying forward the campaign of Yeats. Heaney, like Yeats, revives his original Irish identity, culture and national consciousness. Thus, Fanon's theory that the claims of a bygone national culture 'rehabilitate that nation and serve as a justification of a future national culture'[15] holds relevance in Heaney's poetry.

The issues of language, identity and history take central positions in postcolonial criticism. The construction of identity is a complex phenomenon. In Ireland the

construction of racial and individual identities was a consequence of colonial expansion. British colonizers stripped the Irish people of their native identities and oppressed the natives in order to reconstruct their identities. Thus, identity is a product of history and culture. The age-old colonialism and the successive colonial discourses deprived the Irish people of their capacity to construct their own identities. There have been differences in the versions of history written by the colonizers and colonized. The re-writing of history with the advent of postcolonialism, gives the writers an opportunity to deconstruct the hegemony.

The postcolonial theory examines and analyses representations and construction of identities of the colonized in literary, cultural and historical texts. The theory also provides detailed method for researching the various strategies of power, domination and hegemony used by the colonizers. It also uncovers the ideological undertone of divisions, otherness, stereotyping and power affairs of the dominant. Chris Tiffin and Alan Lawson explain, 'Colonialism...is an operation of discourse, and as an operation of discourse it interpellates colonial subjects by incorporating them in a system of representation'.[16] Heaney's poetry attempts to explore the concept of Irish otherness to the dominant colonizer. Hence, the terms 'stereotype', 'subaltern', 'other' and 'colonial discourse' are fundamental to this thesis and require explanations and contextualization. The concept of 'other' can be found in a number of approaches to epistemology and cultural studies. It can be seen in the existential theory of Sartre, in the theory of deconstruction of Derrida and in the psychoanalysis of Lacan. In the postcolonial theory it means the colonized subject and refers to the way the colonized people were seen from the point of view of the hegemony. 'Stereotype' is an image or a notion which many people have of a particular kind of person and society. Andrew Edgar and Peter Sedgwick explained the term:

> A stereotype is an oversimplified and usually value-laden view of the attitudes, behaviour and expectations of a group or individual. Such views, which may be deeply embedded in the sexist, racist, or otherwise prejudiced cultures, are typically highly resistant to change, and play a significant role in shaping the attitudes of members of the culture to others. [17]

The term 'subaltern' is derived from Latin *alter* [other] and it connotes the person or people of subordinate position. Marllyn Fryue writes that the position of 'other' 'is one of the more dubious privileges of power that it can easily fail to know itself and then, not knowing one's own power, one also cannot see how the power itself interferes with one's knowing the less powerful other. [18] However Gramsci claimed that other is 'a political position itself was capable of thinking state'[19]. In this thesis, the term will be used in a broader sense in accordance of Edward Said's observation that ''the colonized' has since [World War II] expanded considerably to include women, subjugated and oppressed classes, national minorities'. [20]

Edward Said has popularized colonial discourse in his epoch making work *Orientalism*; Gayatri Spivak has used it in her tract entitled *In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics*, and Homi Bhabha in *Location of Culture*. Said's *Orientalism* examines the way in which colonial discourse operated as a tool of power. In the context of postcolonial criticism, colonial discourse shows 'a complex of signs and practices that organize social existence and social reproduction within colonial relationships.[21]

Homi Bhabha examines the concept of colonial discourse, the phenomenon of colonization and the branding and stereotyping of natives. Bhabha extends his idea on Said's concept of 'Colonial Discourse'.

> The objective of colonial discourse is to construe the colonized as a population of degenerate types on the basis of racial origin, in order to justify conquest and to establish system of administration and instruction. Despite the play of power within the colonial discourse and the shifting of positionalities of its subjects (for example effects of class, gender, ideology, different social formations, varied system of colonization and so on). I am referring to a form of governmentality that in marking out 'subject nation', appropriates, directs and dominated its various spheres of activity. Therefore, despite the 'play' in the colonial system which is crucial to its exercise of power, colonial discourse produces the colonized as a social reality which is at once an 'other' and yet entirely knowable and visible.[22]

The construction of identities are neither fixed nor stable, nor are they same in all the colonized nations. They change with the degree of differences in the treatment of the 'others' by the hegemony. The constructions of identities in the Indian subcontinent or Caribbean countries during colonization were different from the construction of identities in Ireland. Bhabha comments on the discourse of the minority:

> (Minority discourse) is not simply the attempt to invert the balance of power within an unchanged order of discourse, but to redefine the symbolic process through which the social imaginary- Nation, culture or community- become "subjects" of discourse and "objects" of psychic identification.[23]

The impact of colonialism deeply affected the vernacular linguistic traditions of the colonized countries. Language being a part of the native culture was looked down upon by the colonizers. The different colonies across the world developed to two linguistic levels namely the colonizer's language and the vernacular. The pressure to choose the vernacular language is dealt with differently by various postcolonial writers. Language plays important role in postcolonial criticism. Seamus Heaney claims:

> ...things are different nowadays in current post-colonial conditions ...the more people realise that their language and their culture are historically amassed possessions, the better. The outlanders at the edge of the world and the speakers at the bottom of the linguistic pecking order have had their Pentecost ... These writers [James Joyce, Hugh MacDiarmid, Derek Walcott, Toni Morrison, Les Murray] and others like them, sing themselves and celebrate their local idiom'.[24]

During colonization, colonizers imposed their language on the people they colonized. As resistance, the postcolonial writers such as Ngugi wa Thiong'o advocate complete return to use of indigenous language. He regards 'Language is...inseparable from ourselves [the natives] as community of human beings with a specific form and character, a specific history, a specific relationship to the world'.[25] Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, in *The Empire Writes Back* (1989) explore the way in which the postcolonial writers utilize colonial and dominant languages. They claim 'Appropriation is the process

by which the language is made to 'bear the burden' of one's own cultural experience... Language is adopted as a tool and utilized to express widely differing cultural experiences'. [26]

Seamus Heaney sees language as practical alternative. He has a divided loyalty for the English language. The English language reminds him of colonial and racial cruelties, cultural domination and Irish misrepresentations but it is the same language that made his works popular in the literary circles across the world. The academic institution Faber and Faber from Great Britain published his work. He is influenced by poets such as Wordsworth and Keats. Heaney defended his espousal of dual tradition:

> To belong to Ireland and to speak its dialect is not necessarily to be cut off from the world's banquet because that banquet is eaten at the table of one's own life, savoured by the tongue one speaks... I do not yield to the notion that my identity is disabled and falsified and somehow slightly traitorous if I conduct my causal and imaginative transactions in the speech I was born to [27]

The English language may be a tyrannical force for the colonizers but also a liberating force for the colonized. It has been used a tool of cultural decolonization by writers such as V.S Naipaul and Derek Walcott in their writings in English. Postcolonial theory, in compensating for the differences created by colonialism accepts a diverse and inclusive society sans differences. The thesis will not only explore Heaney as the poet of Irish subalterns but also as the poet of the world.

The desire for a single version of history persuades the natives to re-write history and fill the historical amnesia. Postcolonial writers have taken on the responsibility to represent the historical phase of the colonial period in their writings. Removed from the history of their country, the colonized had to bear the burden of an alien history. The aim of the postcolonialism is to rescue the history of the marginalized and to give it autonomy; as Partha Chatterjee has remarked, 'to find against the grand narrative of history itself, the cultural resources to negotiate the terms through which people, living in

different, contextually defined communities can co-exist peacefully, productively and creatively within large political units'. [28]

Postcolonialism attempts to uncover the history of colonized whose identity is branded and on whom an alien history is imposed from outside in colonial version of history and literature. The colonized may lack a recorded history they nonetheless posses a remembered one in their memory. The silence of the historical records of the colonized is audible in their memories. The silence of the historical records of the colonized is audible in their memories. Gramsci claims 'The history of subaltern social groups is necessarily fragmented and episodic'.[29] Postcolonialism demonstrates the inheritance of colonial traumas and ethical negotiations of recovery. Robert Young claims, 'Postcolonialism claims the right of all people on this earth to the same material and cultural well-being. The reality, though, is that the world today is a world of inequality...'[30] .The postcolonial writers across the world have been trying to dismantle and deconstruct the hegemony of the Empire. The present thesis will attempt to explore the compromises, compensations and colonial division in the poetry of Seamus Heaney using the parameters of postcolonialism.

Chapter Outline:

Apart from the introduction and conclusion of the thesis, the thesis is divided into three chapters and temporal sequences have been maintained in its organization. The thesis covers all the twelve published anthologies of the poet starting from the first collection of poems *Death of a Naturalist* (1966) to the latest published anthology *District and Circle* (2006). Throughout the analysis, the discussion is based on the central arguments of compromises, compensations and colonial divisions. The first chapter is utilized in introducing the history of Ireland and literary, cultural criticisms which the thesis uses to investigate the poetry of Seamus Heaney. From the second chapter onwards each chapter consists of the four anthologies followed by an introduction and a conclusion to every chapter.

The second chapter analyzes the four anthologies published from 1966 to 1975. This chapter investigates the following anthologies- *Death of a Naturalist* (1966), *Door into the Dark* (1969), *Wintering Out* (1972) and *North* (1975). It locates Heaney's preoccupation with his rural identity and also attempts to unveil the economic exploitation of Irish people and fragmentation of identity of the natives as a consequence of colonization. It deals with the historical amnesia and literary misrepresentations of Irish people in colonial literature. It attempts to figure out the association of childhood memories in his poetry and analyzes how he utilizes various childhood moments in relation to his poetry. The chapter also covers the linguistic genocide of the Irish language and cultural massacre of rural Ireland. The concept of re-writing history through literature with special emphasis on the importance of bogs as a symbolic womb and as a store house of past have been dealt with in the last section of the chapter.

The third chapter deals with the four anthologies published from 1975 to 1987. This chapter analyzes the following anthologies- *Stations* (1975), *Field Work* (1979), *Stations Island* (1984) and *Haw Lantern* (1987). It attempts to explore Heaney's negotiations with the hegemony and locates the compromises and compensations which he makes in the process. The chapter conducts a complex debate about Heaney religious affiliations; it contends that Heaney's poems demonstrate their religious leanings. In discussing Heaney's Catholic sensibilities, it brings the issues and plight of the minority Catholic community of Northern Ireland. It deals with the influence of major writers and the use of classical mythology on Heaney's poetry. The chapter also examines the ways in which Heaney uses the works of classical writer to present the plight of his countrymen.

Chapter four analyzes the anthologies published from 1991 to 2006. The anthologies- *Seeing Things* (1991), *The Spirit Level* (1996), *Electric Light* (2001) and *District and Circle* (2006) are analyzed in this chapter. It focuses on the futuristic vision of making the world a better place. The marginalization of the disabled and the ignored as the 'other' of the society is dealt with extensively in the analysis of the anthologies. The chapter also presents Heaney as a poet propagating non-violence and peace in the world. It traces the influence of the philosophies of Heraclitus; Lord Buddha and Christ on

Heaney's poetry and relates Heaney to the apostles of peace around the world. The influences of other writers of the new world and the intertextualities with their works as Heaney's acknowledgement of their credentials are also investigated. The impact of the World Wars, ethnic cleansings of Balkans wars and the contemporary chaos of the world will be examined in the last section of the chapter with special emphasis on the cultural authority of the Nobel laureate who is aware of his ethical responsibilities. Heaney is discussed not only as a poet of Northern Ireland but as a poet of the World and also as the poet of all the subalterns of the globe.

The final and fifth chapter is the conclusion of the thesis and it contains the findings of the reasons and types of compromises, compensations and colonial divisions in Heaney's poetry. The thesis uses maps, census and photographs of the related events and places to make discussions more viable.

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Now, to pry into roots, to finger slime,
To stare, big-eyed Narcissus, into some spring
Is beneath all adult dignity. I rhyme
To see myself, to set the darkness echoing.

-Personal Helicon, The Death of a Naturalist.

Chapter II

Pry into roots: Remember, Recollect, Rehabilitate.

Introduction

Seamus Heaney hails from Ireland, a country torn by colonial strife, as well as by religious and political conflicts for centuries for centuries. Heaney's poetry mirrors the plight of the marginalized Irish people and the impact of colonization on the culture, traditions, identity, language and economy of Northern Ireland and throws into relief the attitude of hegemonic societies. His negotiations are based on the binaries of metropolis/periphery, self/other, colonizer/colonized, England/Ireland. The major impact of centuries of colonizations in Ireland has been the dislocation of Irish identity. Despite the noble veil of cultural and moral missions, one of the basic motives of colonial enterprise is economic exploitation.

Heaney delves into the past to interpret the present scenario. The bogs represent a storehouse of the memories that, when released from its depth, sometime underscore, and sometime contradict the verdicts of history. In the four anthologies, published from1966 to 1975, which are going to be analyzed in this chapter, Heaney is preoccupied with the concern of redeeming the pride and consolidating the fragmented identity of the Irish people. He chooses to be a digger, and digs deep into the layers of Irish history to expose and fill the voids of historical amnesia.

Heaney's poetry has the objective of rehabilitating culture and traditions, manners and morals, language and identity and history and politics of Northern Ireland. His negotiations are pleas for reconciliations and peace. Heaney deconstructs Irish anxieties and preoccupations from a universal perspective. He identifies common metaphors that interrogate the compromises and the compensations of all colonized people and also the impact of these negotiations on the colonizers.

Death of a Naturalist (1966)

Seamus Heaney's childhood memories of growing up on a farm in Northern Ireland and the exploration of subsequent dislocation from his cultural and agrarian heritage are central to his first anthology *Death of a Naturalist* (1966). Heaney gives a kaleidoscopic view of Irish rural life. He recreates a world of green turf, barns, wells and fields. The uninterrupted harmony of men working in green fields, women occupied with domestic chores, children playing in the fields, are some of the vivid pastoral images with which the anthology is crowded. Nature is a source of powerful wisdom and inspiration to the poet and is frequently offered as a balm to the suffering humanity. Heaney's rural Ireland is populated with the people who, the reader is coecered into believing, do not deserve to suffer. Unforgettable characters, precious memories, nostalgia, are followed by narratives of cruelty and of resilience. The poet desires to compensate. In his poetry, he attempts restore dignity and peace to his own community as a compensation and strives to build a new world through compromise.

The anthology opens with 'Digging'. The title of the poem indicates the notion of excavation for exposure. The significance of the poem is indicated in the collection of Heaney's essay entitled *Preoccupations.*

> Digging, in fact, was the name of the first poem I wrote where I thought my feeling had got into words, or to put it more accurately where I thought my *feel* had got into words.[1]

In the anthology and particularly in the poem, 'Digging', Heaney invokes the experience of his childhood at Mossbown a place located between Castle Dawson and Toome in County Derry. Heaney's poetry exudes with the 'sense of place'. There seems to be an umbilical cord between Heaney and his rural background. Through this umbilical cord, he seems to receive inspiration and thus creates the ingredients of his poetry.

> Under my window, a clean rasping sound

When the spade sinks into the ground:
My father, digging. I look down.

(ll 3-5, Digging, *DN*)

Heaney presents a moving picture of a man bound to his land. The father digs the land and the son (poet) writes. The sound, smell, touch and sight of land tilled yet again for a new crop permeate the poet's being and awaken 'living roots' in his head. The poet's job to bring salvation to his people has begun.

The speaker sits inside 'look [ing] down' from his window. This implies a distance between the two men, marked by their relative positions. The father digs the ground with a spade but the son has 'no spade to follow the men like them'. He opts for the 'pen' with which he 'digs' through the layers of history to lay bare forgotten truths. Walcott suggested the need for a new beginning to postcolonial history 'a new Adam and a new Eden, one which dispenses with imperial history altogether'[2]. The rereading and rewriting of European history and literature are subversive and compensatory gambits. Postcolonial literatures are constituted in counter-discursive strategies to the dominant discourse. Wilson Harris thinks the task of postcolonial subversive stratagem is 'to evolve textual strategies which continually 'consume' their 'own biases' at the same time as they expose and erode those of the dominant discourse'[3].

Heaney analyzes the intricacies of the marginalization strategies of the colonizers. The impact of colonization on the world was always a complex process that took many forms. The suffering and loss of life was on an immeasurable scale. The sense of cultural dislocation, alienation and disintegration of rural life was a result of industrialization which colonialism had brought with it under the veil of a civilization mission, frequently described as the 'White Man's burden'. The phrase, taken from Rudyard Kipling's famous poem, has been used widely to describe the colonial attitude of the Imperialists. In the poem Kipling talks about the fundamental tactics that have been used by the colonizers to legitimize their control over the natives. 'The White Man's burden' is the Eurocentric view of colonization. In the words of Frantz Fanon 'Colonialism was a

denial of all culture, history and value outside the colonizer's frame; in short a systematic negation of the other person.'[4]

Heaney strives against the fragmentation of rural identity. Identity is a product of history and, on a personal level, of memory. The identity of rural Irish people was fractured by colonization. The identity of 'colonized' was imposed on them. The inheritances of loss, sense of living in a cultural vacuum are common feelings shared by all the colonized people of the world. Culture is entangled with history. So, too, is literature. Writers have registered the events of colonization from its very advent. Heaney shares the feeling of suppression. The plight of the ruled is reflected in the poem.

The colonizers have taken control of the native lands hence the original rural culture and identity are under threat of annihilation. Heaney, unlike his ancestors, could not use the inherited the 'spade' and instead turned to the 'pen'.

> Between my finger and my thumb
> The squat pen rests; snug as gun
>
> (ll 1, 2, Digging, *DN*)

The phrase 'snug as gun' indicates that violence had become very common and holding a gun was as comfortable as holding a pen. Heaney's digging activity also suggests his desire to restore the dignity of his nation through his writings. The postcolonial writers have used their writings for resistance and also as a mouthpiece to raise their voices against their calibanization. The English historical records and literary representations have stripped the real identity of Irish people. In postcolonial literature across the world, Caribbean, Irish, Indian, the writers describe the colonial past, decolonization and writer's quest for the original identity. Heaney chooses the 'pen' to accomplish this task. He 'digs' for the redemption of a dignified identity by 'going down and down'. Heaney describes 'rot' which is recurrent in the anthology. He deploys several verbal effects.

> The cold smell of potato mould, the squelch and slap

Of soggy peat, the curt cuts of an edge.

(ll 25-26, Digging, *DN*)

Heaney's use of compound words 'cold smell', 'curt cuts' traces a metaphor of a wasteland where the farmer's crop rots. The inverted image of agricultural produce as 'rotting' rather than blossoming projects a world waiting for the poet's healing touch. The poet's heightened sensitivity makes him aware of the farmer's helplessness and pain.

The family tradition of earning by 'spade' is rejected by Heaney very consciously.

By God, the old man could handle a spade
Just like his old man.

(ll 15-16, 'Digging', *DN)*

'Spade' represents the continuous, hard physical labour of a farming family. Generations gave their best to the land. The continuous long line of farmers 'Just like his old man' indicates that the land was their chief source of income. Heaney chooses to give it up so that he can shoulder the greater responsibilities of rehabilitating the Irish image. However, the realization that he had 'no spade to follow' unleashes a wave of nostalgia for the old order. The use of autobiographical elements in postcolonial writings is a process of recreation of original identity. Thus, 'Digging' is not merely a poem of recollected childhood memories. Heaney goes beyond to touch upon the unspoken and deeper issues related to the Irish people. A deep-seated yearning to preserve the honest contribution of his hard working ancestors and to save them from degradation and defamation can be identified in these lines. Heaney's preference for the pen can be defined as a compensatory act. Edward Larrissy was not off the mark when he stated:

> Digging represents the recovery of past, of intimate relationship. The style of 'Foregrounding' the metaphor, as I call it, (taking hint from Terence Hawkes), suggests intimacy in its need for startling transformation it suggests alienation.[5]

Heaney sacrifices the 'spade' and compromises with the 'pen'. He uses it to reserve the damages incurred by the colonizer's pen. Heaney believes in the power of words and in the poetics of responsibility.

> Between my finger and my thumb
> The squat pen rests
> I'll dig with it.
>
> (ll 29-31, Digging, *DN*)

The closing lines of the poem, stand in contrast to the opening lines where 'gun' is snug. Heaney advocates resistance through his writings. He makes sociological compromises by not advocating 'gun' against 'gun'.

Heaney once again uses the image of his father in the poem 'Follower'.

> My father worked with a horse-plough,
> His shoulders globed like a full sail strung
>
> (ll 1-2, Follower, *DN*)

Apart from the evocative descriptions, the poem highlights the familial and local Irish world. Heaney memorializes the cycle of hard labour on his father's farm. Heaney's father is symbolic of 'Every Irish farmer' who is the carrier of the original tradition of 'spade'. As a child, Heaney had the ambition 'to grow up and plough', to carry forward his social identity. Heaney registers intimacy, warmth and love for his 'expert' father who 'would set the wing / And fith the bright steel-pointed sock'. He boned well with his father and looked up to him.

A different image of his father is presented in the final section of the poem. The old man now comes 'stumbling' behind Heaney indicating a lack of confidence.

> It is my father who keeps stumbling
> Behind me, and will not go away
>
> (ll 23-24, Follower, *DN)*

Heaney's father serves as a signifier for the dilapidating, disintegrating rural Irish self. The preoccupation of Irish self 'will not go away' from Heaney's mind. He feels that even though he has become a famous poet in the world's literary circle, his real Irish identity will never be erased. This is the compensation that Heaney accepts. The real Irish identity will be redeemed and rehabilitated through his poetry. The remapping becomes Heaney's central concern.

Heaney's poem reads as a memoir of his life in Ireland. His exploration of his roots is, most of the time, undertaken on behalf of the whole Irish community. His own childhood is seen as a picture gallery of memories and experience of the vanishing ways of rural life. His portrayals of the traditional agro based ways make his poetry a storehouse of old values and customs.

The long family link with the land has instilled the love of nature in Heaney. The rural identity is part of his collective unconscious. It directs all behaviour and it is the most powerful trait in his personality. Jung wrote that the form of the world into which one is born is already inborn in him as a virtual image.[6]

The poem 'Death of a Naturalist' presents a world of innocence of a child who is in the process of gaining maturity. The title is symbolic of metaphorical death of a 'Naturalist'. Heaney returns to his childhood days at school but his vision is scrutinical. The innocent world is reassessed through the lens of adult vision. The teacher explains the life cycle with reference to 'daddy frog' and 'mammy frog', the new life or the exact opposite of 'death'. The poem does not deal only with the natural world and rural sentimentalism. It also depicts the small scale violence of country life. It expands upon the complexities of the internal world of a child; his awareness of his own tiny stature in contrast to the grandeur and enormity of the natural world. Heaney returns to the image of rot amidst the beauty of the natural world of 'bluebottles'.

All year the flax-dam festered in the heart

Of the townland; green and heavy-headed
Flax had rotted there...

(ll 1-3, Death of a Naturalist, *DN*)

Heaney uses sensuous imagery and exposes the influence of Keats when he writes lines like 'bubbles gargled delicately' and uses onomatopoeia like 'whoosh'. This reflective poem captures the power of nature. Heaney writes about a pastoral world yet the poem is littered with the metaphor of wars.

Poised like mud grenades; their blunt heads farting.

(ll 30, Death of a Naturalist, *DN*)

Heaney is always preoccupied with the concern of violence in his country. He writes a pastoral poem yet he infuses it with these violent images of 'vengeance', 'obscene threat', 'punishing sun'.

The powerful wisdom of the natural world is offered as a compensation for the vengeance of the 'gross-bellied...slime kings'. The nightmare image of powerful spawn stretching out to grab the child to punish him for a childhood act viewed as a crime signifies power reversal. It may be read as a metaphor for the isolation of the native in his homeland by the colonizers. Heaney employs the war metaphor in other poems as well.

Heaney uses military imagery in order to mirror the violence in Ireland. He searches 'for images and symbols adequate to our [his] predicament'.[7] Heaney writes a pastoral poem to compensate for the violence of wars in his country. Fussell suggests that the opposite of experience moments of war is proposing moments of pastoral.[8]

Heaney's poetry is a kind of window through which one can have glimpses of violence of 'Troubles'. His poems are effective in explaining the plight of Ireland to the outer world.

The theme of loss of innocence and gaining of renewed vision is again taken up in another poem 'Blackberry Picking'. The poem describes a childhood activity of berry picking but the poem subtly hints at the developing sexual maturity of these Irish children. Heaney believes that unsupervised children become dysfunctional. Colonization affected every aspect of Irish life. The peace of everyday life was disturbed by violence. Schools were not functioning properly and were closed most of the time. The children had more than enough time to indulge in unsupervised games in place of normal childhood activities. Unlike Wordsworth, Heaney does not believe in 'nature as teacher'. He believes that if children are left unguided and unsupervised, nature would make them wild and enhance their barbarism. The innocence of childhood is transient and in real life disillusion has to be dealt with.

> You ate that first one and its flesh was sweet
> Like thickened wine: summers's blood was in it
> Leaving stains upon the tongue and lust for
> Picking...
>
> (ll 5-8, Blackberry Picking, *DN*)

The poem's metaphorical language intimates that it is loaded with sexuality. The first berry's 'flesh was sweet' enhancing the 'lust for picking' leaving the children's 'palms sticky as bluebeards'. The poem ends with the acquisition of a new vision- the knowledge of helplessness, insatiated desires and failed hopes. The premature knowledge of sexuality terminates innocence. Heaney sympathizes with such deprived children who were marginalized and deformed for no fault of their own. Heaney's poetry serves to explain and compensate by exposing their condition before the world. Heaney has just 'words' to offer to his people. He exhibits his burden of guilt towards these children in his flashback. He says 'I always felt crying. It wasn't fair'.

Colonization through, various colonial divisions, resulted in imposing another identity on natives. The shift took place in identity from 'ours' to 'theirs', from 'natives' to 'colonized'. The colonial world is divided, as Fanon describes:

> This world is divided into compartments, this world cut in two inhabited by two different species. The originality of colonial context is that economic reality, inequality and immense difference of ways of life never come to the human realities.[9]

The stripping of identity took place at individual as well as personal levels. The experience of colonization, with all its harmful manifestations, is shared by other colonies of the world. Post colonialism claims the right of every individual on this earth hence in a postcolonial text the question of identity returns as persistent questioning of frame and the space of representation.

Heaney belongs to the Roman Catholic community of Northern Ireland. In the 1940s when Heaney was growing up, there was the emergence of the Catholic middle class. Their growing dissatisfaction led to the civil rights campaign of the 1960s. Violent riots between the Catholics and Protestants took place in 1969 and 1970. However, the formation of Provisional Irish Republic Army launched a campaign of violence against the Army deputed by the British Government. The campaign, modeled on the civil rights campaign in the United States involved protest marches, road blocks, poster processions and sit-ins and the bloody backlash of the Army.

Heaney's colonial consciousness leads him to search for his original identity amidst the confusing mazes of the mechanized world. He engineers his own rural identity in 'The Barn'.

> Threshed corn lay piled like grit of ivory
> Or solid as cement in two lugged sacks
> The musky dark hoarded an armoury
> Of farmyard implements, harness, plough-socks.
>
> (ll 1-4, The Barn, *DN*)

Heaney, through agricultural images and rural landscapes, collects the pieces his fragmented identity. This works as compensation against the colonial divisions created by more than one factor. Heaney presents even the minutest details of rural Irish life.

Manners and morals are mirrored in his poetry. He seems to zoom into the heart of rural Irish life. In 'Churning Day', he projects an image of his mother busily churning butter.

> My mother took the first turn, set up rhythms
> Than slugged and thumped for hours.
>
> (ll 1-2, Churning Day, *DN*)

The tender and touching picture recollects the security of a childhood otherwise ruined by external turmoil of the violence in Northern Ireland. It mirrors the psychology of a child to whom domestic security matters more than external violence. It also mirrors the ideology of the adult who perceives the need for external security for perfect domesticity. In the closing poem of the anthology 'Personal Helicon', the agrarian world is represented by 'wells' and 'old pumps'. Water represents the source of nurturing both to the farmer and the poet. Heaney describes his affinity with rural life:

> I loved the dark drop, the trapped sky, the smells
> Of waterweed, fungus and dank moss
>
> (ll 3-4, Personal Helicon, *DN*)

Heaney reveals that he will 'pry into roots' and 'set the darkness echoing'. Heaney explains the reasons and the purposes of his poetry. He writes in order to look inward, at himself and into history. He evokes the testimony of time to disprove the false claims of the colonizers.

Heaney recreates Ireland in all its myriad-coloured splendour. Its hustle-bustle is given a vivid presentation. In 'Diviner', Heaney paints the magic of the Diviner who searches for water with his divine rod. These beliefs and myths are integral to rural life. The Diviner is professional in his hunt. The search of water is the quintessence of every life on the earth and it is among the oldest quests of mankind. He recreates the old forgotten Ireland and talks about the skill that people once took very seriously. The Diviner is busy in 'Circling the terrain, hunting the pluck / Of water'. The 'bystanders' try their hand at his skill but they are unsuccessful until 'He gripped expectant wrists' and than 'The hazel stirred.' The beautiful image of lending a helping hand implies the image

of guidance and support which a beginner needs. The Diviner is a noble spirit who is ready to share his art with every body. The humane image of the Diviner defines the relationship with society. The theme of the poem implies that Heaney would also serve his society with words. Heaney recreates, bit by bit, the world which had blurred and faded at the advent of colonization.

The theme of fear, in various forms, is prevalent throughout the anthology. It surfaces as the childhood fear of 'Slime Kings' in 'Death of a Naturalist', and as the fear of darkness in 'The Barn'. In psychoanalytical criticism, fear and desire find their outlet in creative activity. Heaney's poetry can possibly be interpreted as a creative outlet through which his repressed desires and fear find expression. John Keble claimed in his lectures 'On healing power of poetry' (1844), 'Poetry is indirect expression...of some overpowering emotion, or ruling taste, or feeling, the direct indulgence where of is somehow repressed'.[10]

The expression of fear exhibits a desire for a psychological compromise with changed circumstances. Heaney often pauses at intersecting sites like. The theme, landscape and images of the rural world are testimonies of the fact that Heaney wishes to write about his rural identity. He wishes to recreate every single picture of the world in vernacular colours to compensate for the blurring and marginalization of Irish civilization. Heaney seems to suggest that even through he remains cognizant of the much loved rural Irish identity, his poetry will move beyond. Another overpowering concern of this anthology is to highlight the significance of filial relations. His father and grandfather appear in 'Digging', his mother figures in 'Churning Day', and a younger brother in 'Mid-term Break'. 'Mid-term Break' is an ironical poem that discusses a sudden, accidental death in all its finality. While some other distant relatives are referred to in other poems such as 'Ancestor's photograph'. Heaney advocates the united extended family against the nuclear. In a disharmonized world where almost everything is fragmented, a united family represents unity and harmony.

Door into the Dark (1969)

Heaney's poetry is populated with people living far from the madding crowd. He revitalizes the beauty of bucolic life, history, mythology and culture of Ireland. Memories and recollections are primary colours with which Heaney paints the arena of his concerns. Tradition merges in the contemporary context, life into death, and so do poetic and political divisions, and also inner and external reality in his memory and in his poetry.

In his second collection of poems, *Door into the Dark*, he zooms into and focuses upon the minute and otherwise unobserved details of Irish country life. The anthology is sprinkled with pastoral nostalgia along side a futuristic vision. He once again celebrates the unsung heroes of the rural world. They may be simple village folk but he represents them as remarkable and special in their own ways. Heaney commented on the title of his anthology in the *Poetry Society Bulletin*:

> ...comes from the first line of 'The Forge', a poem that uses the dark active centre of Blacksmith's shed as emblem for the instinctive, blurred stirring and shaping of some kinds of art. And I was happy to discover after I had chosen the title that it follows directly from the last line in my first book...[12]

The title of the anthology resonates with the last line of '*Death of a Naturalist*', where Heaney declares that he writes poetry in order to set the 'darkness echoing'. This is a linking of consciousness which anticipates vibes of the collection to follow.

In his early poetry, Heaney delves into his own childhood in order to relate it to the predicament of the present Ireland. The maturity and renewed vision is gained through childhood recollection via adult scrutinical vision. Its metamorphosis assumes social and historical dimensions. He gains a mature awareness of the divisions of his community and country.

> All I know is a door into the dark
>
> (ll 1, Forge, DD)

The first poem 'The Forge' can also be read in contrast to 'The Barn' where the protagonist is afraid of and unwilling to face the darkness. The protagonist in 'The Forge' is willing to venture into darkness to find out what lies there, depicting possibly the psychological metamorphosis. He does not compromise with his fear but instead faces it squarely. He find that beyond the 'anvil's short-pitched ring' and the 'fantail of sparks', a blacksmith is working on a new horse shoe. Heaney combines beauty and ferocity in the single image of 'fantail of sparks'. The contrast of dark and bright, flesh and metal as well as intelligence and strength are gathered together in the phrase.

Heaney does not celebrate the smithy like Yeats. Heaney's smith is unlike the smith in Yeats's Byzantium poems. He is a common rural smith. A blacksmith is a representative figure of Irish rural life. The poet nostalgically categorizes him as a forgotten figure in modern day industrial life. The advent of industrialization has almost killed the rural trades. The rural modes of transport face the threat of extinction with the arrival of mechanized communication. The desire for quick profit has ruined the rural economy. Yet Heaney's blacksmith compromises with life, living by recollections of bygone days.

> He leans out on the jamb, recalls a clatter
> Of hoofs where traffic is flashing in rows;
>
> (ll 12-13, The Forge, *DD*)

Heaney's smith is defeated by the grim realities of the developed world which cannot accommodate him. The decaying smithy represents a secluded spot where he can continue to exist.

> Outside, old axles and iron hoops rusting;
> Inside, the hammered anvil's short-pitched ring,
>
> (ll 3-4, The Forge, *DD*)

Like the blacksmith's, another rural trade, that of the 'Thatcher', is also threatened with extinction. The thatcher is a rural roof-maker. With the advent of the

industrial revolution, and mass migration from village to town, the demand for the annual repair of the roof declined sharply. Trained only in this trade, the thatcher lost his livelihood. The poet mourns for a world gone by and also laments the fact that the new world contained no room for the skilled workmen of the old agrarian society. Thus, the thatcher symbolizes the creative instinct of rural people which was utilized in small business.

Although a thatcher is an ordinary rural man, he has the power to turn ordinary things like 'straw and sharpened end of rods...staple' into a neat 'sloped honeycomb roof'. Others gape at his 'Midas touch'.* Rural Ireland comes alive through such delineations. Heaney, as a redress for his people glorifies their lives and professions in his poetry. Heaney compensates for their fading identities by writing verses about them.

David Lloyd explains Heaney's approach to poetry:

> [t]he specific relation of an 'Irish identity' to English literary and political establishment provides not only language but the very term for which it is the question to be posed or resolved. For it is not simply the verse form, the melody, or what not, that [Heaney] takes over, it is aesthetic, and the ethical and political formulations, its subsumes, that Romantic and imperial tradition supplies[13]

Heaney is a poet and has words through which he can articulate his feelings but his protagonists like blacksmiths and thatchers are silent because of the socio-political conditions prevailing in Ireland. They are the silenced subalterns. Perhaps they are like Spivak's subalterns who are unable to speak because of 'the phased development of subaltern is complicated by imperialist project'. [14] In social and political conditions prevalent in contemporary Northern Ireland, giving vent to feelings could be a dangerous thing. Blake Morrison remarks, 'What links various traders, labourers and craftsmen who fill his first books is that, unlike him [Heaney], they are lacking in speech'.[15] Silence has many manifestations. It can be a silence of resistance or compromise with the hegemony.

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*. A semi-legendary king of Phrygia, who, having hospitality entertained Silenus, the companion of Dionysus, when he had lost his way, was given a wish, and wished that all that he touched might become gold. Historically, 'Midas' was the title of all the kings of Phrygia, like 'Pharaoh' of the kings of Egypt. A Midas perhaps of the 7th c. B.C. dedicated a throne to the god of Delphi.[16]

Heaney celebrates the poetics of silence, speaking the unspoken, stating the unstated. Heaney deconstructs the British hegemonic hierarchies by giving primacy to writing over speech. Henry Hart analyzed that 'if a logocentric preference for the spoken has devalued the written in Western thought, as Derrida insists, Heaney tends to celebrate the accomplishment of writing over evanescence of speech'[17]

Heaney employs these strategies to lend his voice to the voiceless, silent subalterns. He digs deeper into the history and the psyche of Irish peoples. 'Requiem for Croppies', resurrects the Irish rebels, who were killed by the English at Vinegar Hills in Co. Wexford in 1798. They are dead and gone, perhaps lost in the pages of history. Yet Heaney exhibits pride in their deeds. Their sacrifices are narrated in the poem:

> The pockets of our greatcoats full of barley-
> ...
> ...
> And in August the barley grew up out of the grave.
>
> (ll 1, 14, 'Requiem for Croppies',*DD*)

These historically muted victims left behind the seeds of rebellion which sprout through poetry. Heaney juxtaposes the past and the present. He reflects the political scenario of contemporary Ireland through the rebellion of the past. The poem was written in 1966, when the Irish literary circle commemorated the fifth anniversary of the Easter Rising of 1916, of which, the seeds were sown in the rebellion of 1798.

He sings the requiem for the 'croppies boys' (named because of their cropped hair as that of French Rebels of French Revolution). These rebels were killed mercilessly at Vinegar Hills. The colonial cruelties burn through the poem. Heaney lends his voice to these historically muted victims, so, they can bring light to the dark deeds of the White colonizers.

> They buried us without shroud or coffin
>
> (ll 13, Requiem for Croppies, *DD*)

The life of a native is worthless and cheap in the colonizer's eyes. They even deprived the Croppies of a dignified burial. The Croppy boys were buried sans the burial rituals. For the British, the Croppy boys were rebels but for Ireland they represent the epitome of patriotism. Heaney glorifies their sacrifices as a compensation for their losses. He creates a literary space for the heroic deeds of the Croppies who are registered as terrorists in colonizer's historical records. The postcolonial writers have taken the responsibility to reinterpret the history of the colonial period in their writings. The historical narratives are sometime termed as 'slave narrative'. The Eurocentric version of history presented the paternalistic role of 'masters'. The sense of belonging to inferior or superior race is acquired through the consciousness. The problem of history becomes crucial:

> For not only are the questions of truth and fiction, of narrativity and inderterminacy, time and space, of pressing importance because the material ground, the political dimension of postcolonial life impresses itself so urgently, but the historical narrativity is that which structures the forms of reality itself.[18]

Heaney rewrites history through literature and writes back for an amnesia free view of history. The rewriting of history has been a major concern and significant strategy of postcolonial writers.

In 'A Lough Neagh Sequence', Heaney describes the act of poaching by the Irish fishermen who came in conflict with the colonizers. The colonizers exploited them economically. They took control of almost each and every aspect of economic resources. The natives were reduced merely to the position of slaves and labourers. Their own resources did not belong any more to them. The British Company officially owned the right of eel fishing on Lough Neagh.

> The lough will claim a victim every year.
> It has virtue that hardens woods to stone.

(ll 1-2, A Lough Neagh Sequence, *DD*)

Heaney's verses bring to the surface the exploitation of the colonized Irish people but these are not only confined to Ireland but to all the colonies of the world which share the same burden of economic exploitations. In 'The Plantation', Heaney maps the cycle of Irish colonization. The Irish plantation provides a historical emblem of the invasions, domination and exploitation of Ireland.

> You had to come back
> To learn how to lose yourself
> To be pilot and stray-witch,
> Hansel and Gretel in one.
>
> (ll 33-36, The Plantation, *DD*)

Ireland has undergone serial colonial domination by Scotts, Vikings and English. Hence Heaney regards it as an archetypal. He uses the fairytale of Hansel and Gretel to articulate his feelings. He dives in the pages of Irish history for retelling history.

The concluding poem in *Door into the Dark* is 'Bogland', which represents a new beginning. In an interview with Robert Druce, Heaney stated that 'Bogland':

> ...was the first poem of mine that I felt had the status of symbol in someway; it wasn't trapped in its own anecdote, or its own dosing off: it seemed to have some kind of wind blowing through it that could carry on[19]

The poem 'Bogland' is dedicated to his friend T.P Flanngan. The poem can be regarded as a compensatory statement for Theodore Roethke's 'In the Praise of Prairie'. To Roethke's 'Horizons have no strangeness to eye', Heaney's answer is that 'We have no prairies / To slice a big sun at evening'. The postcolonial Irish people will reanalyze history and look at the 'bottomless' and 'wet centre' of their own history for regaining their pride. Postcolonialism is a continuing process of resistance and reconstruction. For the reconstruction, the poet-archeologist regards the bogland as a symbol of of hidden history. He remarked:

> I had been vaguely wishing to write a poem about bogland, chiefly because it is a landscape that has a strange assuaging effect on me, one with associations reaching back into early childhood... So I began to get an idea of bog as the memory of the landscape, or as a landscape that remembered everything that happened in and to it. Moreover, since memory was the faculty that supplied me with the first quickening of my own poetry, I had a tentative unrealized need to make congruence between memory and bogland and, for the want of a better word, our national consciousness.[20]

The Irish bogs preserved traces of ancient civilizations. The poem indicates that the bogs will 'melt and open' again. Heaney wishes to look 'inwards and downwards' into Irish history. The poem 'Bogland' looks forward to the bog poems of later anthologies. It serves as a preface to them.

Wintering out (1972)

The publication of Heaney's third anthology, *Wintering Out*, corresponds with the intensification of political turmoil and chaos caused by Northern Irish Troubles. Heaney, through his poetry, wished to address the colonial divisions in Irish society as well as the problems of violence which resulted in dividing society. However, he did not wish to advocate the violent retaliation practiced by Irish Republic Army (I.R.A).

Wintering out (1972) is the reflection of his concern for 'the distresses that we are all under going'. Explaining the title of his poem, he remarked:

> It is a phrase associated with cattle, and the hired boys also.... It is meant to gesture towards the distresses that we all are undergoing in this country at the minute. It is meant to be, I suppose, comfortlessness enough, but with a notion of survival in it.[22]

In the previous two anthologies, *Death of a Naturalist* and *Door into the Dark*, Heaney's poetry is permeated with Irish rural life in which he grew up. It is the poetry of self. The sense of belonging to his nesting ground is visible all along. Heaney describes it as 'a sense of place'.

Wintering Out is more concerned with the Irish problems. The anthology searches out issues of suffering, resistance and endurance of Irish people. It encapsulates memories, landscapes, traditions and words from Heaney's own world. In a number of poems in the anthology, he evokes historical, political and cultural genocide of rural Irish life. The anthology also contains some language oriented poems which depict the linguistic colonization of Ireland.

Or, as we said,
fother, I open
my arms for it

(ll 1-3, 'Fodder', *WO*)

Through language, Heaney reclaims collective identity. The Irish pronunciation for fodder is '*fother*'. Neil Corcoran claims that the poem reminds readers of the existence of 'a lexicon and register of pronunciation distinct from 'received' or standard English'[23]. The poem is an assertation of cultural differences that exist between the Irish and English. Heaney exhibits affinity with the rural world. The word '*fother*' makes him 'open...arms for it'. The use of 'we' depicts the community identity. It portrays the poet's patriotism. Ironically, the modern world of luxuries recedes and Heaney draws comfort from the rural environment

These long nights
I would pull hay
for comfort, anything
to bed the stall

(ll 17-20, 'Fodder', *WO*)

The theme of linguistic genocide continues in different poems of the anthology. To compensate the loss Heaney recreates the colonizers from the pages of colonial history. One figure is of the British writer Edmund Spenser who glorified the monarchy in his *Farie Queene.* Spenser symbolizes the colonial dominance, exploitation and ventriloquism. In 'Bog Oak', Heaney traces history of Oakwoods derived from Boglands.

Perhaps I just make out
Edmund Spenser
dreaming sunlight
encroached upon by

(ll 21-24, 'Bog Oak', *WO*)

Spenser, the representative of the monarchy, wrote a prose account, *A View of Present State of Ireland*, in 1598 in which he depicted what he defined as the miserable condition of Irish people.

Jon Stallworthy quotes Yeast's introduction to the work of William Blake, he declares:

> When Spenser wrote of Ireland he wrote as an official, and out of thought and emotions that had been organized by the state. He was the first of many Englishmen to see nothing but what he was desired to see.[24]

History is always written from the perspective of the dominant. As the monarchy desired, Spenser saw just the grim aspect of Irish life:

> Out of every corner of woodes and glynes they came creeping forth upon theyr hands, for theyr legges could not beare them; they looked like anatomyes of death, they spake like ghostes crying out of theyr graves; they did eate of dead carrions, happy were they could find them, yea, and one another soon after, insoe much as they very carcasses they sparned not to scrape out of theyr grave; and if they found a plot of watercresses or shamrokes, they flocked as to a feast...[25]

One of the concerns of the postcolonialism is to critically analyze the representations of natives as 'other' in a colonial text. The natives have always been presented in negative shades in the works of colonizers. The famous postcolonial critic Frantz Fanon examines the image of Africans as 'other' in *Black Skins, White Masks*:

> My body was given back to me sprawled out, distorted, recoloured, clad in mourning in that white winter day. The negro is an animal, the negro is bad, the negro is mean, the negro is ugly; look, a nigger, it's cold, the nigger is shivering, the nigger is shivering because he is cold, the little boy is trembling because her is afraid of the nigger, the nigger is shivering with cold, that cold that goes through your bones, the handsome little boy is trembling because he thinks that the nigger is quivering withrage, the

> little white boy throws himself into his mother's arm: Mama, the nigger's going to eat me up.[26]

Homi Bhaba questions the colonial Otherness and the colonial imagination, he writes:

> It is the scenario of colonial fantasy which in staging the ambivalence of desire articulates the demand for negro which the negro disrupts. For the stereotype is at once a substitute and a shadow. By acceding to the wildest fantasies (in popular sense) of colonizer, the stereotyped Other reveals something of the 'fantasy' (as desire, defense) of that position of mastery.[27]

The colonial lens has always viewed 'natives' as 'savages' to be civilized, as 'heathens' to be converted to 'Christianity', as 'enemies' to be defeated and as 'other' to be stereotyped. A re-contextualization of colonial text in relation to the cultural beliefs and political circumstances that produced them would reveal that they rendered a cultural service to the colonial ideologies.

Through Edmund Spenser and recalling the exploitations, Heaney attempts to bring the pathetic situation of Ireland before the world. He is like Coleridge's 'Ancient Mariner' who has the albatross of colonialism around his neck and had a sad story of 'otherness' to tell the world. Perhaps he seems to make compensations for the silenced 'other' of the history, through his poetry.

In 'Midnight', Heaney comments upon the disappearance of Gaelic by equating it with wolf hunting in Ireland. In the process of linguistic dominance 'The tongue's leashed in my [Heaney's] throat'. He captures the dilemma dealt with in 'Traditions', an allegorical elegy written for the loss of native Irish language. At its outset, the poem describes the damage of the Irish language. He equates linguistic dominance with the rape of Gaelic.

> Our guttural muse
> was bulled long ago
> by alliterative tradition.
>
> (ll 1-3, 'Traditions', *WO*)

Heaney's concern for the language registers his divided loyalties. Irish people do not identify with the English language as it is the language of colonial oppressions which created colonial divisions between them. It gave birth to the binaries of English / Gaelic, England / Ireland, Colonizers / Colonized, Victimizers / Victims and Master / Slaves.

Following the Elizabethan Plantations of Ireland, the Irish language was 'bulled' and raped by the dominant and colonial Elizabethan 'alliterative traditions'. The earliest meters of English poetry in Anglo Saxon and Middle English were alliterative in form. The feminine sensibility of 'guttural muse' was forcefully combined with masculine Elizabethan English. Andrew J. Auge points out:

> ...it takes the form of a colonial usurpation of an indigenous culture, a hierarchical act of appropriation that seems to call forth a countervailing revival of repressed element.[28]

The poem is centrally preoccupied with Shakespeare, during whose time the Ulster plantation took place. Heaney uses Shakespeare to create a sexual and linguistic metaphor. He alludes to Shakespeare's *Othello* to depict the condition of colonial linguistic hegemony. The metaphor of rape continues. Heaney quotes the Duke's speech, where he calls 'opinion, a more soverign Misris of effects' to which Othello replies 'Tirant Custome, most Grave Senators / Hath made the flinty and Steele Coach of Warre / My thrice-driven bed of Downe'.[29]

'Custome' finally 'beds...down into British Isle', showing the victory of the language of colonizers over native Irish language. The simile of 'Brigid's cross yellowing in some outhouse' is used to indicate the vanishing Irish language. 'Brigid's cross' is an ancient Irish symbol which is believed to protect the house from fire. Beside the old age dominance, Heaney also talks about the contemporary bulling. The linguistic dominance of British had consequences on current English spoken in Northern Ireland. The Irish uses 'Correct Shakespearean' and the terms introduced by the colonizers. When the Londoner uses certain coinage it is to be treated as 'Correct Shakespearean'. Irish English, on the other hand, is considered, by them, to be a lower variety. Parker is right

when he writes about Heaney's divided feelings towards English language. He suggests that, in fact 'correct Shakespearean...reminds him [Heaney] of defeat'.[30]

Heaney in order to compensate for the loss of and to revive the bygone pride of Ireland revitalizes characters from literary history. He recalls the character of Mac Morris from Shakespeare's *Henry V* and James Joyce's Leopald Bloom from *Ulysses*. In Act III of *Henry V*, Fluellen, the Welshman, is about to criticize the Irish to which Mac Morris replies 'What ish my nation?' in order to make his presence felt. Heaney asserts a sense of belonging and pride in the statement of Bloom, where he defends himself by saying 'Ireland is my nation. I was born here'. Parker is of the view that Heaney pays homage to James Joyce for his contribution to Modern Irish literature.[31] The image of the 'other' in Elizabethan literary traditions includes that of the Irish as comic buffoon, uncivilized, 'anatomies of death'. This is countered in the poem by Leopald Bloom; Heaney recalls the figure of Bloom to claim compensation through poetry for stereotyping Irish people as 'other'. Heaney admires Bloom and Joyce for compensating for the ill treatment doled out to the Gaelic language by inheriting the 'alliterative traditions' of Elizabethans and adapting it to suit the 'guttural muse'.

Sometimes characters in Heaney's poem suffer some kind of human problems. They are the victims of betrayal, marginalization and exploitations. Heaney contemplates on the callousness of human race. In the 'Bye Child', he describes the parental indifference. The poem deals with the story of a dumb boy who 'was discovered in the hen house where she [his mother] had confined him'. Newton writes 'for me, the most powerful conjuring of the wild child motif is found in Seamus Heaney's poem 'Bye Child', part of his 1972 collection'. [32] The insensitivity of the major population of the world in dealing with the disabilities and handicaps is a major concern in Heaney's poetry.

Heaney's poem is a true account of a boy who was cabined and confined in a dirty hen house. The figure of the tyrannical mother is given a colonial dimension. She acts like a colonizer dictating to the weak and disabled boy. Heaney empathizes with the

'Little henhouse boy'. Heaney attracts attention by presenting a brutal portrayal of motherhood. The poem shows high degree of indifference of human society. The little henhouse boy was punished for his backwardness. He was not only confined but was deprived of parental care. Disabilities make the retarded people the 'other' of society. A philosopher and a social worker Kittay describes the social model of disability:

> Disabled people have convincingly argued that disability itself is a social, not a natural, category. Human beings come in variety of forms, with different capacities and incapacities, abilities and disabilities, strengths and frailties. Some of the variants are distributed over a life span, some are distributed differently by birth or circumstances. Neither the fundamental equality nor the fundamental dignity of humanity is impugned by these variations. The disability that is associated with bodily impairment derives from social world which privileges some bodies over others, some minds over others, and in doing so, construct a world which allows human capacities to flourish in some but not the others.[33]

Arthur Kohrman, a pediatrician, emphasizes that 'our culture is not hospitable to (a) children; (b) children with chronic illness; or (c) particularly children who are technologically dependent'.[34] Things will change for the disable with the change in the attitude of society. Heaney wishes to compensate through poetry. He also desires to highlight the fact that marginalization brings similar problems for the different groups.

The boy in 'Servant Boy' keeps patience and 'counsel' but finally gives voice to his anger.

> ...resentful
> and impenitent,
> carrying the warm eggs.
>
> (ll 18-20, 'Servant Boy', *WO*)

'The Last Mummer' projects the transformation of resentment to retaliation. The 'mummer' is 'lost' depicting a vanishing rural life, 'trammeled / in the taboos of the country'. Heaney as reparation gives places to these victims of human indifferences. Poems such as 'Anahorish', 'Fodder', 'Toome' and 'Broagh' follow the Irish tradition of '*dinnseanchas*'. It is a tradition about the sounds of a word, its pronunciation and usage, and the people who use it.

In the anthology Heaney comments upon linguistic hegemony. Neil Corcoran observes that 'community of pronunciation is an implicit emblem for some new political community'[35] and the poem 'acts as a linguistic paradigm of reconciliation beyond [or in spite of] sectarian division'.[36] Heaney makes these Irish words known to the world to add local colours to his poetry to reintroduce them into common language and to save them from extinction. The speaker in the poem describes 'Anahorish' as 'soft gradient / of consonant, vowel medows'. Heaney registers affinity and intimacy for Anahorish:

> My 'place of clear water',
> the first hill in the world
> where springs washed into
> the shiny grass
>
> (ll 1-5, 'Anahorish', *WO*)

Jon Stallworthy comments on Heaney's use of names of Irish places in his poetry. He remarked 'the naming of place gives Heaney magical access to his own country through mirror of its language'.[37] In the poem 'Toome', the speaker's 'mouth holds round / the soft blasting' and utters the sound of poem's title again and again, 'Toome, Toome'. Heaney never uses Irish words simply for the sake of sprinkling his poetry with local flavours. Often the so words are linked to painful historical memories as in 'Toome'. The Toome Bridge was the site of Irish rebellion in 1798. The naming of Irish location continues in 'A New Song', the speaker describes his rendezvous with 'a girl from Derrygrave' and 'Derrygrave... was just / Vanished music.'

Heaney also mentions landscapes and places such as 'Castle Dawson', 'Upperlands' and 'Planted Bawn'. The word 'planted' is reminiscent of the plantation of Ireland in the seventeenth century during which thousand of English Welsh settlers arrived in the province. The speaker in 'The Wool Trade' alludes to the dying Irish society and economy. Heaney travels down the memory lane of Irish history. Following the surrender of Huge O' Neills and O' Donnells lords to the English in 1603, the rebel Earls left Ireland in 1607(also known as Flight of Earls) to seek Spanish help for a new rebellion. The lord Deputy, Arthur Chichester seized the opportunity to colonize the

province. Heaney laments the lost language and traditions of Ireland with the beginning of the Plantation. Heaney makes a compromise by accepting of Ireland's changed economy and politics. He is fully aware of the colonial divisions created in almost every walk of Irish life.

In 'Backward Look', the speaker describes the dying Gaelic language as the flight of a snipe and fleeting of a hunter.

> A snipe's bleat is fleeting
> its nestling-ground
> Into dialect,
> Into variants,
>
> (ll 5-8, 'The Backward Look', *WO*)

The poem evokes Heaney's pastoral vision in which the Irish language continues to live through the farmers who speak it. The landscapes, the language and traditions are intrinsic to the identity. Heaney recollects the fragmented pieces of Irish identity to compensate for the fractured colonized identity imposed on them by colonialism. In 'The Otherside', Heaney addresses the divisions in his society. 'other' refers to someone with whom one does not share similarity. In the poem a Catholic speaker comes face to face with a Protestant neighbour. The division between them is not only physical but ideological as well. This ideological division between them is the product of their 'sides'. To the speaker's ear, the neighbour speaks with 'a fabulous, biblical dismissal. / that tongue of chosen people'.

The reference here is to the belief of Protestants that their faith is superior as it is steeped in Bible. The neighbour speaks a 'patriarchal dictum'. Albeit their differences, they live under the single roof of Christianity. The neighbour emphasizes on his belief of practicing the direct teachings of the Bible yet he is not disrespectful about the other side of the house (the Catholics).

> 'Your side of the house, I believe,
> hardly rule by the Book at all'.
>
> (ll 29-30, 'The Other Side', *WO*)

Avoiding differences, they discuss only the 'weather' or 'grass seeds'. They only touch each other on the shoulder or talk about everyday matters. The age old beliefs can not minimize their differences. The social and religious barrier forces them to be indifferent. Blake Morrison claims 'What *Wintering Out* does is to explore the deeper structures of present hostilities, the way in which divisions of Protestant and Catholic communities are embedded in language and topography'.[38] The poem ends with various options which are quietly suspended. Heaney does not laying down any political or ethical judgment for himself.

The bog and its associations have always attracted Heaney's attention. The poet has written many poems which takes the theme of bog and its derivatives. In the earlier anthologies poems such as 'Bog Oak', 'Bogland' can come under this heading. Heaney was influenced by P.V. Glob's *The Bog People* which contains case studies and details of the Iron Age bodies found in the European bogs. The first bog body which makes its arrival is 'Tollund Man'. The reason for his death is unknown but Glob's prediction is that his death was a part of a religious sacrificial ritual. A fertility myth in which human beings where sacrificed to the fertility goddess Nerthus, so that she may renew the cycles of seasons and provide a good harvest to Iron Age community. In an interview with James Randall, Heaney accepted:

> I wrote "Tollund Man" and it was an extremely important poem for me to write....And when I wrote that poem I had a sense of crossing a line rally, that my whole being was involved in a sense of- the root sense- of religion, being bonded to do something, being bounded to do something. I felt it a vow; I felt my whole being caught in this.....I think that brought me a new possibility of seriousness in poetic experience....the bog images....[were]...a deeply felt part of my life, a revelation to me.[39]

Tollund Man is a 'Bridegroom to the goddess'. Heaney draws parallel between the sacrificial victims of the Iron Age and the sectarian killing of contemporary Ireland. The Tollund Man is transformed into 'a scapegoat, a privilege victim, and ultimately Christ-surrogate, whose death and bizarre resurrection might redeem, or symbolize redemption'[40] for the violence-victims of conflicts in Ireland.

The Bog Body of Tollund Man

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I could risk blasphemy,
Consecrate the cauldron bog
Our holy ground and pray
Him to make germinate

The scattered, ambushed
Flesh of labourers,
Stockinged corpses
Laid out in the farmyards,

Tell-tale skin and teeth
Flecking the sleepers
Of four young brothers, trailed
For miles along the lines.

(ll 21-32, 'The Tollund Man', WO)

The local incident of contemporary violence is woven with the historic evidence of the past. The murder of 'four young brothers' refers to an incident in which four young Catholics were murdered by Protestants and were 'dragged along a railways line in an act of mutilation'[41] In a radio interview Heaney said, 'I've tried to make a connection lately between things that come to the surface in bogs, in particular in Danish bogs, and the violence that was coming to surface in north of Ireland'[42]. Heaney's description underscores the archetypical pattern of human behaviour. The disastrous human history has not changed from the sacrificial and death penalties of the Iron Age victims to the sectarian murders of contemporary Northern Ireland. Ironically in the so-called civilized world the atrocities continue as an extension to the barbarities of the prehistoric civilization. This sense of incessant human savagery produces sense of 'sad freedom' and finding no compensation for the grim realities, the poet 'feel[s] lost' and 'Unhappy at home'.

North (1975)

The poems in the collection entitled *North* analyze into history, mythology and identity of ancient Ireland. There are some poems which uncover the history of conquests of the Vikings and later of the British. Heaney was influenced by P.V Glob's *The Bog*

People (1969). Glob's study gives an account of how the turf cutters accidentally dug out the bodies of men and women buried under the bogs in the Iron Age, these unfortunate victims had been sacrificed during tribal rituals or killed as punishment and then consigned to the bog. Heaney writes of *The Bog People*:

> It was chiefly concerned with the preserved bodies of men and women found in the bogs of Jutland, naked, strangled or with their throats cut, disposed under the peat since early Iron Age, times [...] taken in relation to the tradition of Irish political martyrdom for the cause whose icon is Kathleen Ni Hooligan, this is more than archaic barbarous rite: it is an archetypal pattern. And the unforgettable photographs of these victims blended in my mind with photographs of atrocities, past and present, in long rites of Irish political and religious struggles.[44]

In *North*, Heaney continues to explore the themes of Northern Irish origin. The bog, for Heaney, is a store house and a memory bank, 'a dark casket where we have found many clues to our past and to our cultural identity.'[45] Heaney's bog can be regarded as an answering myth to the American prairies which 'slice a big sun at evening'. Ireland contains more bogs than any other country except Finland. It has almost 1,200,000 hectares of the island which is nearly 1/6 of the country. The bodies of Celtic human sacrifices are still preserved in the bog. The corpses were thrown into the bogs from which they were discovered. Heaney makes sensuous references to these bog victims in a number of poems.

For the Nobel Prize winner, Seamus Heaney, poetry has its own special action and purpose and it has its own mode of reality. In *Poetry Society Bulletin*, Heaney writes 'During the last few years there has been considerable expectation that poets from Northern Ireland should 'say' something about 'the situation'... in the end they will only be worth listening to if they are saying something about themselves'[46]. Heaney as a spokesperson communicates 'the tragedy of a people in a place: the Catholics of Northern Ireland'.[47]

Heaney provides poly perspectives of Irishness in the anthology. The first section of *North* contains poems which are rich in mythology and history and the poems in the

last section discuss the political conditions and the plight of living in a divided colonized society.

The bogs for Heaney are repositories where the 'past' is preserved. As he digs down in the 'wet centre' which is 'bottomless', he develops a new relation with old culture. He juxtaposes the past with the present.

> Every layer they strip
> Seems camped on before
> The bog holes might be Atlantic seepage
> The wet centre is bottomless.
>
> (ll 25-28, 'The Bogland', *DD*)

Heaney, through his poetry, provides a transparent window on the Irish past and present. He gives a mythical version of history. To lay bare the past, he borrows imagery from archaeology, linguistics and anthropology. His mythical versions set the contemporary Irish history, especially the violent campaigns of the I.R.A, against the background of the early Iron Age. The main impetus behind the bog poems were the photographs and the descriptions of the bog people in Glob's *The Bog People:*

> ...through their sacrificial deaths...were themselves consecrated for all time to North's, goddess of fertility- to Mother Earth, who in return so often gave their faces her blessing and preserved them through the millennia [48]

Most of these bog bodies were victims of sacrificial rituals or they were punished by death for crimes. Heaney as an act of compensation gives them a literary space. He resurrects them and makes them speak. Now they can tell their story to the whole world. He gives them back their dignity and their voices. 'The Grauballe Man', 'The Bog Queen', the Windeby girl of 'Punishment' and the girl of 'Come to the Bower', they return from the Iron Age to share truths with the whole world. The role of the bog is that of an observer. Silent and patient it watched and waited for centuries for the poet to relieve it of its dark and deadly secrets. It witnessed the atrocities wrecked by man upon

man. It concealed the horrific secrets until they were unearthed by the 'digger', Seamus Heaney.

The vital concerns of postcolonial criticism are the search for truth and establishment of an amnesia free perspective. Heaney investigates the bog memories to find the truth. The bog bodies might have been static in the descriptions and photographs, but they to life in Heaney's poetry. While uncovering the layers of history mummified by nature, guilt envelops Heaney and he feels wretched, and attempts to shoulder 'a kind of manhood / steeping in to lift the coffins / of dead relations'. These poems elicit of shame and horror but they also suggest the peaceful and non-violent ways of reforming society.

Heaney's compensation goes far beyond ordinary compensations. He experiences sympathy and empathy with these corpses. As compensation, he even exhibits erotic passion. In 'Come to the Bower', the ritual communion with the bog girl is as romantic as any in the seduction poems by John Donne or Andrew Marvell. The only exception is that the beloved is a corpse. Heaney, in this attitude, comes very close to the Romantic Gothic tendency. Heaney's apparently macabre claims are designed to shock the readers out of complacency.

In 'The Bog Queen', he speaks for the first documented body ever dug out of a bog. She is resurrected from the depth of the bogs where she lay waiting for the revelation.

> I lay waiting
> between the turf face and demesne wall,
> between heathery levels
> And glass-toothed stone.
>
> (ll 1-4, 'The Bog Queen', *N*)

The poet claims that her body was 'braille / for the creeping influences' and 'illiterate roots' entangled her. She shares her torturous story 'I was barbered / and stripped / by a turf-cutter's spade'. She might have been a sacrificial victim or an

adulteress who had her head shaven by the early Gauls. The I.R.A also tarred and shaved the head of girls who dated the British soldiers. Heaney explained the reason for these sacrificial punishments:

> ...You have a society where girls head were shaved for adultery, you have a religion centering on the territory, on a goddess of the land, and associated with sacrifice. Now in many fury of Irish Republicans is associated with a religion like this...[49]

Heaney's empathy for innocent victims and his hostility towards culprits reaches its most confessional pitch in 'Punishment'. The inspiration once again comes form Glob, who describes how a fourteen year old girl in the first century A.D was led naked out on to the bog with bandaged eyes and a collar round her neck, and drowned in the little pit at the Windeby estate in Scleswig. Heaney describes the punishment by reliving it through powerful imagination:

> I can feel the tug
> Of the halter at the nape
> .....
> I can see her drowned
> body in the bog,
>
> (ll 1-2, 9-10, 'Punishment', *N*)

Heaney condemns himself as the 'artful voyeur' who fantasizes about the event. He drowns in guilt as he can do nothing to stop similar punishments in contemporary times when the Catholic women were still tarred by the I.R.A. The theme of 'Punishment' is the core of the poem. The poet tortures himself for compromising with silence, for just being a mute witness to terrible punishments that negated the world's claim to civilization.

> I who have stood dumb
> when your betraying sisters
> cauled in tar
> wept by the railings.
>
> (ll 37-40, 'Punishment', *N*)

The Bog body of Windby Girl

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Corcoran comments 'Heaney's dumbness is blameworthy, then neither 'connivance' nor understanding can excuse it.'[50] Heaney's guilt-trip exhorts the reader to do more than simply observe. He skillfully draws attention to universal fear psychosis regarding insurgencies. The very civilized world ironically, contains the same attitude and problems as the primitive world. Violence has just one aspect- barbarism.

'The Grauballe Man' is another bog body, 'poured in tar' with his 'slashed throat'. He was discovered in a bog and was named after the town in Jutland near where he was found in 1952. Glob described that his neck was slashed from ear to ear and his naked body was dumped in the bog around 310 B.C. He was a victim of ritual sacrifice. Grauballe Man is retrieved from 'the peat, / bruised like a forceps baby', symbolizing a technically assisted new birth. Heaney comments on the myth:

> I think poetry is seriously attempting to purge our land of a terrible blood-guilt, and inwardly acknowledging our enslavement to a sacrificial myth. I think it may go a long way towards freeing us from the myth of portraying in its true archaic shape and colour, not disguising its brutality.[51]

Heaney alludes to the 'Dying Gaul' (A sculpture known as the Dying Gaul, a copy in stone of the one of the bronzes from the groups of figures of defeated Celts which decorated the Acropolis at Pergamon in second century B.C.) from the poet David Jones. He almost gives him a heroic status. Dying Gaul is an image of heroic death.

> ....Dying Gaul
> Too strictly compassed
>
> (ll 43-44, 'The Grauballe Man', *N*)

Heaney commemorates the bog people through the images of the collective unconscious. In 'Strange Fruit', he describes the visage of a beheaded bog girl. She is 'Murdered, forgotten, nameless, terrible / Beheaded girl'. Heaney's poetry also traces not only British colonization but also the invasion of the Vikings and the subsequent imposition of their culture. The analogy is drawn between the violence of the Vikings and

The Bog body of Grauballe Man

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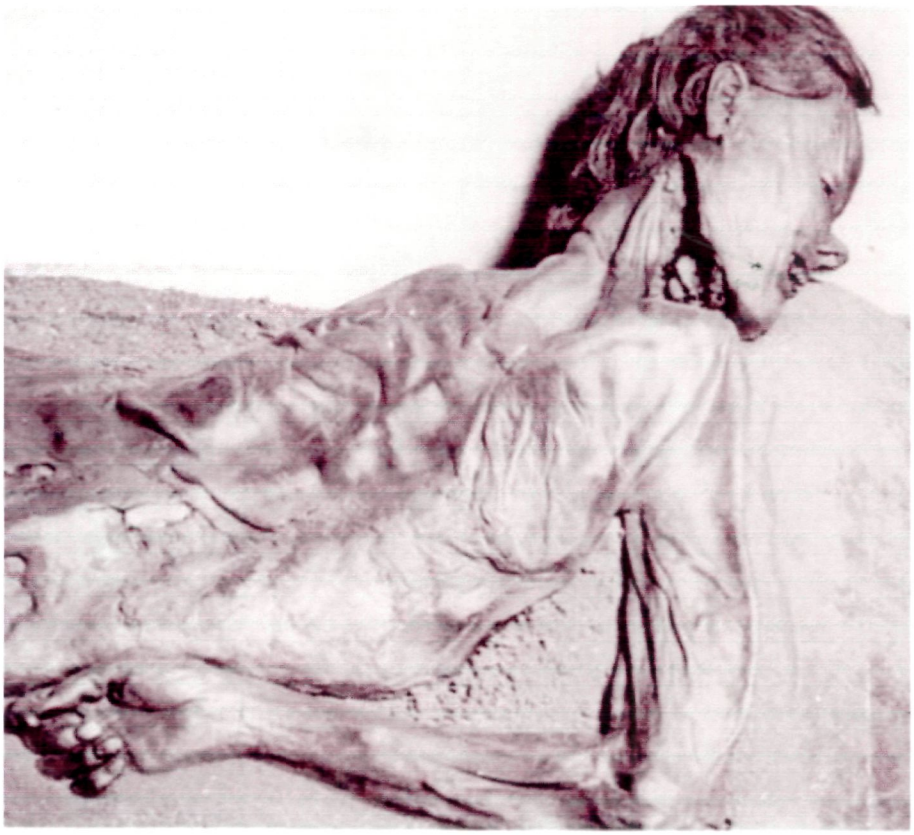

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the violence prevalent in contemporary Northern Ireland. In 'Viking Dublin', he comments on the repetitive history of Ireland and prays to the 'Old father':

> Old fathers, be with us.
> Old cunning assessors
> of feuds and of sites
> for ambush or town
>
> (ll 77-80, 'Viking Dublin: Trail Pieces', *N*)

Heaney alludes to James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.* In the *buildensroman*, the protagonist Stephan Daedalus, at the end prays, 'Old father, old artificer, stand me now and ever in good stead' and 'old father....Merchant and scholar who have left me blood', from Yeats's *Responsibilities*, Heaney also alludes to Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and Synge's *The Playboy of the Western World.*

> I am Hamlet the Dane,
> skull-handeler,parablist,
> smeller of rot
>
> (ll 54-56, 'Viking Dublin: Trail Pieces', *N*)

Heaney identifies images and recalls figures from literature. He uses them as expressions of his plight. Heaney, who described his poetry as a 'slow, obstinate papish burn',[52] uses the historical epithet of Romans for the British soldiers after the ruthless killing of civil protestors by British army on Bloody Sunday in Derry in 1972. On that Sunday, a civil rights march with almost ten thousand participants, ended in the killing of fourteen unarmed civilians. The differences between Catholics and Protestants became more acute. Heaney mythologizes the situation. In 'Kinship', Tacitus is called to witness the internal religious conflicts.

> And you, Tacitus,
> observe how I make my grove
> on an old cragnog
> piled by the fearful dead:
>
> (ll 121-124, 'Kinship, VI', *N*)

In *Germania**, Tacitus** describes a sacred grove where sacrifices of human beings in public mark the birth of a nation. The German tribe worshipped Nerthus or Mother Earth after drowning the slaves who participated in the rituals. Heaney used the metaphor of ritual sacrifices for mirroring similar killings in contemporary time. He remarks:

> It turn out that the bogs in Northern Europe in the first and second centuries A.D contained shrines of the god and goddess of the time, and in order that the vegetation and the community would live again after winter, human sacrifices were made: people were drowned in the bogs. Tacitus reports on this in his *Germania*... Now in may ways the fury of Irish Republicanism is associated with a religion like this... there are satisfactory imaginative parallels between this religion and time and our own time. They are observed with amazement and a kind of civilized tut-tut by Tacitus in the first century A.D...[53]

In the poem he writes about his motherland and its sectarian problems. He talks about the colonized and divided society.

a desolate peace.
Our mother ground
 is sour with the blood
of her faithful,

they lie gargling
 in her sacred heart
 as the legions stare
 from the ramparts.

Come back to this
'island of the ocean'

(ll 125-134, 'Kinship, VI', *N*)

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*. A treatise on Germany by Tacitus, probably published in A.D 98. The treaty describes the geographical and physical characteristics of the country and appearance, political and social customs and dress of the inhabitants; the organization of army; their religion and land tenure: their sloth alternating with war like activity;their intemperance and gambling; the exemplary morality of their family life. [54]

**. Whose praenomen is uncertain and birthplace unknown, was probably born c A.D 55 of a good Roman family, and probably died about the end of the reign of Trajan (A.D 117). It is conjectured from the words in which he briefly refers to his carrer that he was a military tribune and held one of the offices of the vigintivirate(q.v) under vespasian, was quaestor under Titus, and praetor under Domitian(A.D 88). [55]

Heaney refers to a colonial situation where Irish 'tribes' fight and kill each other in the name of religion. In the line 'a desolate peace', he expands on his disapproval of such a peace and hints to *Agricola** by Tacitus. In the monograph British chief Calgacus assails the Roman invader of the country: 'Robbery, butchery, the lairs call Empire, they create a desolation and call it peace'[56]. The violence of the Irish Troubles is described by Heaney as a gendered struggle between Kathleen Ni Houlihan and 'a male cult whose founding fathers were Cromwell, William of Orange and Carson'[57] and whose godhead is figuratively Roman, 'incarnate in a rex or Caesar resident in palace in a place of London'. The 'legion' who 'stare from the rampart', as the two divided communities, Catholics and Protestants, kill each other. The strategies of conquest, the poet realizes, are archetypal.

In the poems such as 'Ocean's Love to Ireland' and 'Act of Union', Heaney returns to the metaphor of rape for the exploitation of Ireland by the British. Rape is not just the physical exploitation of a body but it, in a larger sense, is the exploitation and subjugation of the psyche as well. Heaney traces the colonial marginalization of a civilization and presents it as the metaphorical rape of an Irish maid by Sir Walter Raleigh. The title of the poem 'Ocean's love to Ireland' is an inversion of Raleigh's own long poem 'Ocean's love to Cynthia'. It expands upon Raleigh's love for Elizabeth. Heaney's attempt to write its companion piece with ironical shades can be regarded as an ironic compromise. Homi Bhabha is of the view that colonial mimicry is an 'ironic compromise'. The poem depicts the rape of a young Irish maid by Sir Walter Raleigh, who tied her to a tree. The poem highlights the colonizer's masculine superior strength represented through the portrayal of Sir Walter Raleigh against the weaker self of the colonized represented by the Irish maid. Behind the civilization mission can be discerned the naked lust for wealth and power.

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* A laudatory monograph by Tacitus on the life of his father-in-law, Julius Agricola, published about AD 98; Agricola had died in A.D 93. Tacitus recounts Agricola's distinguished ancestory and early military service in Britain in the troubled times when Suetonius Paulinus was governor (the days of Boadicea), his advancement to the quauetorship and praetorship,to the governorship of Aquitania(A.D 74-6) to the governship of Brotain(A.D 77 or 78). He briefly narrates the history of the successive stages of conquest of Britain by Romans, culminating in achievement of Agricola. It ends with his death and eloquent apostrophe to a great Roman. [58]

Speaking broad Denvonshire
Raleigh has backed the maid to a tree
As Ireland is backed to England

And drives inland
Till all her strands are breathless

(ll 1-5, 'Ocean's Love to Ireland', *N*)

Robert lacey lifts the curtain from the civilization mission:

> He [Raleigh] came to the country, a younger son with a little wealth and no lands to inherit, with the express intention of carving out for himself from the lush and mineral-rich acre an estate whose resource he could never hope to win in England. In Ireland he could- and in due course did secure a castle from which he could lord it over the hapless natives whose leaders, lands and faith it was pride to have taken away. [59]

The line 'drives inland' connotes the power and force with which Raleigh chased his goal. Raleigh's masculine force leaves the Irish maid desperate and panting, 'Sweesir, swatter! Sweesir, swatter!'. The chastity of Irish maid was violated by the rapist. The frailty of her body is depicted in the lines:

He is water, he is ocean, lifting
Her farthingale like a scarf of weed lifting
In front of a wave

(ll 7-9, 'Ocean's Love to Ireland', *N*)

Heaney uses sexual imagery and sexual linguistics to articulate the weightlessness and ease with which the maid was deprived of her chastity. The state of breathlessness suggests the exhaustion is suggestive of the exhaustion of Irish economic resources by Sir Walter Raleigh after the Desmond rebellion of 1569-73 and1579-83 in Muster in Southern Ireland. The rebels were the Earl of Desmond dynasty- the Fitzergirald family or Geraldines-and their allies. They opposed the efforts of Elizabeth English government to extend their control over the province of Munster. The result of the rebellions was the destruction of the Desmond dynasty and subsequent plantation and colonization of Munster with English settlers.

Heaney rewrites history in his poems. He recounts the destruction left behind by Raleigh. After the exploration 'the ruin maid complains in Irish / Ocean has scattered her dreams of fleets'. Heaney sympathizes with the victim. The maid complains in Irish and she is still attached to her identity distancing herself from the victimizer's language. Heaney points towards the negligible compensation for her. In the poem 'Act of Union', which symbolizes the historical Act of Union in 1801 which abolished the Irish parliament and formally united Ireland and Great Britain into the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Heaney once again evokes the gender-landscape analogy. In the poem, Heaney depicts a man addressing a woman pregnant with his illegitimate child symbolizing the attitude of England to Ireland.

> And I am still imperially
> Male, leaving you with the pain

(ll 15-16, 'Act of Union', *N*)

The impregnation suggests the dominance of male power and the continuity of the dynasty. Analyzed from this point of view the impregnation refers to the extension of English plantations through sowing of seeds suggesting the role of the father. Heaney says 'Conquest is a lie' and removes the veil of charily from the White man's burden. The female has to compromise with the 'pain' bestowed tyrannically upon her. The Irish self is too weak to 'ignore' the huge kingdom of Britain.

> I am the tall kingdom over your shoulder
> That you would neither cajole nor ignore

(ll 9-10, 'Act of Union', *N*)

The 'Mustering force' and 'parasitical' attitude are too much for the weak Ireland to bear. Heaney continues with the imagery of pregnancy.

> I foresee will salve completely your tracked
> And stretch marked body, the big pain
> That leaves you raw...

(ll 26-28, 'Act of Union', *N*)

The rapist Britain dominates Ireland the ravished maid and brands her with 'stretch marked body' and 'big pain' as a mark of brute supremacy of masculinity of the colonizers. This refers to the psychological and historical scars of colonial neurosis.

In 'Funeral Rites' the funerals of the contemporary victims of Northern Irish violence and the burial of Gunnar, one of the heroes of *Njal Saga* is juxtaposed. *Njal Saga* is an epic of Icelandic literature by an anonymous author which describes the progress of blood feuds and covers the period of Christian conversion in 999 and the details of Battle of Clontarf outside Dublin in 1014 A.D. Magnusson is of the view that the epic recounts 'the years of savage internal strife, murderous intrigues, and ruthless self-seeking power-politics that lead, in 1262, to the loss of independence that [Iceland's] pioneers had created'.[60] Heaney draws a parallel between the sectarian violence of Catholics and Protestants and the ethics of revenge of Norsemen of the saga. He talks of the years of the savage internal strifes and the religious enslavement or the colonization of society through religion. The people are 'shackled in rosary beads' and they 'pine for the ceremony'. The victims are 'disposed like Gunnar / who lay beautiful / inside his burial mould'. Heaney desires a better society free from all social and religious conflicts. He visualizes an undivided healthy society where the Irish would live sans the shackles.

> the great chamber of Boyne,
> prepare a sepulchre
> under the cupmarked stones.
>
> (ll 41-43, 'Funeral Rites', *N*)

The 'Boyne, scene of victory in 1690 is celebrated annually by Ulster Loyalists and it insists on a common ground shared by both the Catholics and Protestants. Heaney hopes that those victims who were 'disposed like Gunnar', may remain 'unavenged' by the present time Norsemen. Neil Corcoran is of the view that the poem 'urgently desires an end to the terrible cycle, but it can imagine such a thing only in a mythologized visionary realms'[61]. Heaney moves to the histories of primitive cultures that are similar to the violence-ridden Northern Ireland.

the hatreds and behind-backs
of the althings, lies and women,
exhaustions nominated peace,
memory incubating the spilled blood.

(ll 25-28, 'North', *N*)

In 'Belderg', he talks about the excavated Norse settlements in Co. Mayo. He explains the Scottish, English and Irish words which had their influence on the name of his family farm, Mossbawn, in *Preoccupations*, he explains the word '*moss*' as:

> ...a Scotts word probably carried to Ulster by the Planters, and *bawn*, the name the English colonists gave to their fortified farmhouses. Mossbawn, the planter's house on the bog. Yet ... we pronounced it Mossbann, and the *ban* is the Gaelic word for white....In the syllables of my home. I see a metaphor of split culture of Ulster.[62]

The 'fortified farmhouses' hint at the physical colonial divisions between the colonizers and the colonized. 'Fortification' depicts a narrowness of vision. Strong walls separate the colonizers from the colonized. The walls symbolize distrust, hatred and fear. The colonizers who pretend to have come with a goodwill mission actually had hidden agendas.

The fortification is a projection of this hypocrisy. In another poem the allegory of colonization is presented through the mythologized version of 'Hercules and Antaenus'. Hercules is 'sky-born and royal' while Antaenus is a 'mould-hugger'. Heaney empathetically relates with the banished and innocent who are compromised with such myths. He laments the fate of defeated the Antaenus. Hercules is a hero who defeated the native Antaenus by removing him from his source of strength in the soil.

and lifts and banks Antaenus
high as a profiled ridge,
a sleeping giant,
pap for the dispossessed.

(ll 29-32, 'Hercules and Antaeus', *N*)

The only ray of light for the oppressed people is that the 'sleeping giant'* may one day break their shackles of enslavement. The defeated Antaenus becomes an icon of martyrdom, providing 'pap for dispossessed'. Heaney provides a hopeful compensation for the dispossessed.

Heaney implies a great deal in 'Whatever You Say Say Nothing', which he wrote just after 'an encounter / With an English journalist', who is 'in search of 'views / On Irish thing''. He talks about the contemporary media maniac society and highlights how serious issues are either trivialized or sensationalized to provide 'news' for the urban public. The world has become so insensitive, self centered, inhuman and indifferent that 'bad news is no longer news'. The media covers every corner of the world. This is a world 'Where media-men and stringers sniff and points, / Where zoom lenses, recorded and coiled leads / Litter the hotels'. They are involved in covering violence and political affairs. Violence and the internal conflict are given prime slots and Heaney presents his concerns for a society that is becoming more and more aberrative.

> 'Oh, it's disgraceful, surely, I agree.'
> 'Where's it going to end?' 'It's getting worse'
> 'They're murderers.' 'Internment, understandably...'
> The 'voice of sanity' is getting hoarse.
>
> (ll 21-24, 'Whatever You Say Say Nothing', *N*)

Heaney projects the barbarity of war which results in people becoming roofless and seeking refuge in camps as internees. Each day a 'new camp' is established.

> I saw the new camp for the internees:
> A bomb had left a crater of fresh clay
> In the road side, and over in the trees
> Machine-gun posts defined a real stockade.
>
> (ll 50-53, 'Whatever You Say Say Nothing', *N*)

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*. The in Greek mythology, sons of Ge, said to have been produced when the blood from the mutilation of Uranus fell upon her. they were monstrous beings, partly human, of vast size, with serpents for feet. They rose against the gods and attacked them, but were defeated and imprisoned in the earth. [63]

Poetry, the 'voice of sanity', is a reflection of its society but it is also 'getting hoarse'. The raw material of a contemporary poet is drawn from the grim realities of the contemporary world. Heaney's concern is for healing the world and presenting a futuristic vision where the world is not divided by political boundaries. He offers compensations through his poetry. Heaney, the poet, internalizes the sorrows and sufferings of humanity and tries to reduce the pain in the ideal sphere of poetry. This poetic compensation may be viewed as the poet's tribute to Ireland in particular and to humanity at large.

The second section of *North* was an attempt at some kind of declarative voice. The section is prefaced with the lines from Wordsworth's *The Prelude* and W.B Yeats's *Autobiographies*. Wordsworth is from the land of colonizer where as Yeats is from the land of colonized. The epigraph from *The Prelude* provides a comment on 'fair seedtime' of his childhood where he 'grew up' and the 'beloved Vale' to which he was 'transplanted' and the lines from Yeats present a nationalist desire to die fighting the Fenians against the Orangemen.

The colonizers have always engineered tactics of 'divide and rule'; Orangeism is an ideology that promotes and protects the dominance of Protestants over Catholics. These tactics have been used by colonizers over the centuries to create sectarian problems in Ireland. In a declarative voice Heaney recounts the divided society of Protestants and 'Catholics' who 'in general, don't speak'. In fact Heaney belongs to the Catholic community himself and he speaks for them. In an interview with Frank Finahan, he claimed:

> The community to which I belong is Catholic and nationalist. I believe that the poet's source now, and hopefully in the future, is to maintain the efficacy if his own "mythos", his own political and cultural colouring rather than to serve any momentary that his leaders, paramilitary organization or his own liberal self might want him to serve.[64]

In the poem 'Orange Drums' he talks about the ideological differences between them and Protestants who refused to acknowledge the leadership of the Pope.

To every cocked ear, expert in its greed,
His battered signature subscribes 'No Pope'.

(ll 10-12, 'Orange Drums, Tyrone,1966', *N*)

'Summer 1969' describes the sectarian violence which shadowed the life of Irish people. Peace vanished and fear engulfed them.

A sense of children in their dark corner
Old women in black shawls near open windows

(ll 9-10, 'Summer 1969', *N*)

Heaney's world is disharmonized and the 'death-count' is increasing at an alarming rate as the 'two berserks club each other to death'. 'Exposure', which closes the sequence '*Singing School*' and *North*, is an appropriate conclusion to the anthology. It was written after Heaney moved away from Belfast to Eire in Co. Wicklow in 1972 'with a young family of my own and a slightly less radio set, listening to the rain in the trees and news of bombings closer to home'[65]. The title of the poem has multiple meanings. It points to his exposition of the truth, thus filling the historical amnesia and also to his openness in living in communion with natural surrounding. Heaney has quoted a section of 'Exposure' in his Nobel Prize acceptance speech, *Crediting Poetry:*

> Feeling puny in my predicaments as I read about the tragic logic of Osip Mandelstam's fate in the nineteen-thirties, feeling challenged yet steadfast in my non-combatant status when I heard, for example, that one particularly sweet-natured school friend had been interned without trail because he was suspected of having been involved in a political killing. What I was longing for was not quite stability but an active escape from quick-sand of relativism, a way of crediting poetry without anxiety or apology [66]

The poem is a reflection of the psyche of Heaney- his *responsible tristia* as a poet who wishes to articulate the voice of the community to which he belongs. Heaney, in the poem, is exposed to the cold weather of December at Wicklow when he went to see a comet. A sense of failure covered him when he 'missed / The once-in-lifetime portent, /

The comet's pulsing rose'. Heaney is gripped by dilemmas, doubts and second thoughts in the poem. However his vision is renewed when he is recalled to the 'The diamond absolutes' of his vocation as truth teller.

> I am neither internee nor informer;
> An inner émigré, grown long-haired
> And thoughtful; a wood-kerne
>
> (ll 30-32, 'Exposure', *WO*)

Heaney is neither an 'internee' nor 'informer'. He is 'a wood-kerne' or one of the rebels of Irish history who took to the woods, when defeated, in order to prepare for further resistance.

Conclusion

From the publication of *Death of a Naturalist* (1966) to *North* (1975), Heaney seems to adopt the *modus operandi* of 'digging' and 'exposing'. The first poem of the first anthology *Death of a Naturalist,* is 'Digging' which resonates with the notion of excavation and the concluding poem of the fourth anthology *North* is 'Exposure'. The poet commences a programme with 'Digging' through poetry for 'Exposure' of truth. In the process of the poetic excavations, bogs, attract the poet's attention. Geogory Schirmer notes 'Heaney has developed the image of the bog into powerful symbol of continuity of human experience' [68]. Heaney explores the theme of Northern origin and Irish Identity through recollections and negotiations. He explores his sense of place in poems of the Gaelic tradition of *dinnseanchas.*

Heaney has evoked mixed responses from the literary circle. A number of poems deal with Heaney's memory of farm, familiar and filial. The canvas of Heaney's early anthologies such as *Death of a Naturalist* and *Door into the Dark,* is crowded with the people living far from the madding crowd. Helen Vendler remarks 'at first Heaney aggrandized and consecrated his infant world'[69]

Heaney's use of mythology, politics and history has received reductive responses from critics such as Ciaran Carson and Edna Longley. Carson referred to Heaney as 'a mythmaker, an anthropologist of ritual killing, an apologist for 'the situation' in the last resort, a mystifier'[70] where as Longley argues that Heaney 'exclude the inter-sectarian issues...by concentrating on the Catholic psyche as bound to immolation to savage tribal loyalties'[71]. Seamus Deane, however, tries to dilute the charges:

> The poems express no politics and indeed they flee conceptual formulation with almost indecent success. Instead they interrogate the quality relationship between the poet and his mixed political and literary traditions. The answer is always the same. Relationship is unavoidable, but commitment, relationship gone vulgar, is a limiting task. Neverthe less commitment is demanded during crisis.[72]

Heaney confessed to Robert Druce:

> When people are killing one another, what are *you* doing?....And that I came to this notion that, in a time of politics or violence, it wasn't artistic function just to be liberal and deplore it but if you believe in one set of values over the other, to maintain those values in some way. You needn't necessarily maintain that belief by writing political poetry or writing deploring army....But I think you can write about, or out of a sensibility or set of images which imply a set of values.[73]

Richard Murphy maintains that Heaney's poetry is 'seriously attempting to purge our land of terrible blood-guilt'[74] Parker claims that in 'Traditions' that 'Correct Shakespearean remind Heaney of the defeat'[75]. Heaney however uses the poem as a platform to criticize and compensate for the wrongs done to the Irish people by the colonizers. The argument, however, has certain limitations. Heaney is neither a simple anthropologist of ritual killing nor he is a mystifier. He digs down the layers of history not for the sake of anthropology but to lay bare the truth. He searches for the image and symbols to suit the predicament of the conditions of Northern Ireland. He makes compromises with academic disciplines like history and anthropology to rehabilitate the futuristic vision.

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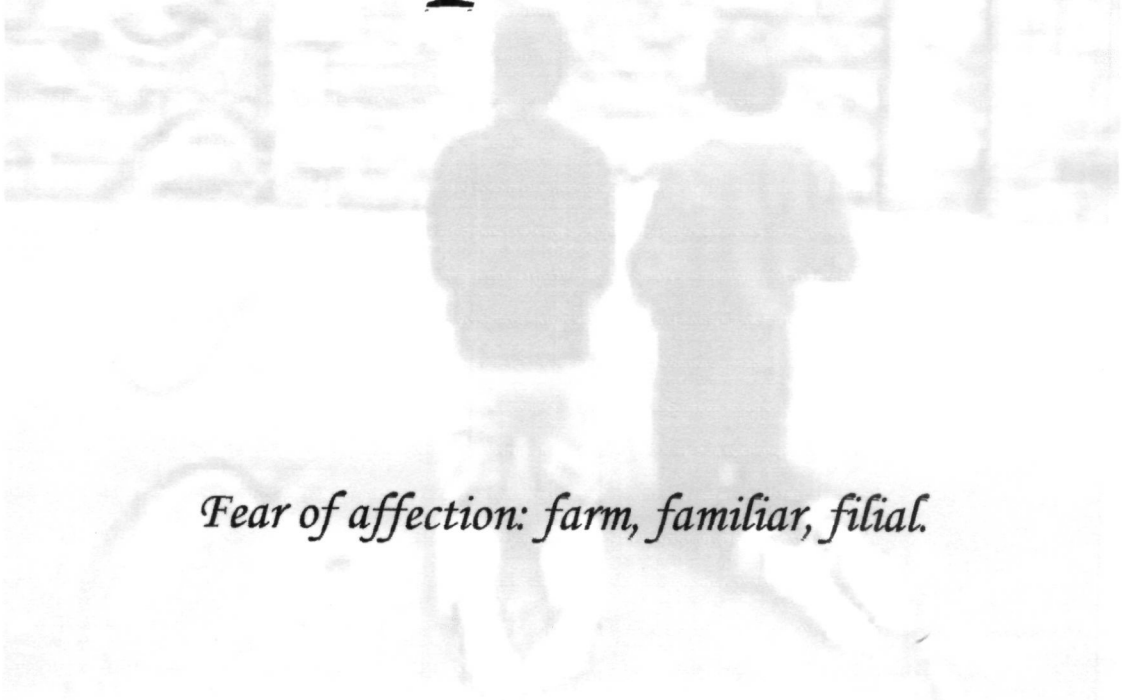
Fear of affection made her affect
Inadequacy whenever it came to
Pronouncing words 'beyond her'...

Clearances IV, The Haw Lantern.

Chapter III



Fear of affection: farm, familiar, filial.

Introduction

Heaney frequently looks back at childhood and at the concept of a sacral pastoral world which according to him always retains 'some vestigial sense of place as it was experienced in older dispensation'[1]. With his umbilical cord still attached to the traditional rural world and Celtic Christianity, the poetic consciousness of Heaney seems deeply embedded in nostalgia. He laments the losses and subsequent changes and he longs for a peaceful Ireland. He deals with thousands of people and is sensitive to each one. The canvas of his poetry is crowded with people from different strata of life and society. He writes poems, about rural Ireland peopled by peasants, forgers, blacksmiths, and priests, and also about the modern world inhabited by singers, soldiers, and youths in discotheque. Heaney 'peoples' his poetry. This credit earlier been given to Plato, Chaucer and Shakespeare.

Memory and imagination, for Heaney, are compensatory faculties through which he converts absence into presence, cultural vacuum and fragmented selves into consolidated identities. He sees himself as the custodian and the celebrant of a lost culture, forgotten history and diminishing heritage. He makes imaginary rendezvous with the familiar and filial in the anthologies analyzed in the present chapter.

This chapter will analyze the anthologies published between 1975 and 1987. The chapter will unravel Heaney's negotiations with the hegemony and the compromises and compensations which he makes in the process. It will try to explore Heaney's quest for reclaiming his original Irish identity which is profoundly embedded in the native culture. The desire and need of a single reliable version of the past and the need to revise the documentation of the past to counter certain historical circumstances are among the strategies employed by Heaney to scrutinize the misrepresentations of Irish culture and traditions in hegemonic records. Heaney's efforts at dismantling the hegemony and deconstructing colonialism will also be dealt with.

Stations (1975)

This anthology uses a writing style popularized in the late twentieth century. Heaney was in California, teaching in an America university while he was writing the anthology. In 1971, an American poet, Geoffrey Hill published a collection of poetry called *Mercian Hymns*, which contained prose poems. In the preface to his anthology, Heaney admitted that what he had regarded as 'stolen marches' in a form new to him had been commanded by a work of 'complete' authority. Upon his return to Ireland, he completed and published *Stations* in 1975. The poems were first published as a pamphlet by Honest Ulsterman Press in Belfast and several of the poems were published in his *Selected Poems 1996-1987* and *Opened Ground Selected Poems 1966-1996.*

The title of the anthology refers to the Catholic Stations of Cross which is a series of fourteen images that represent different events that took place on Christ's journey to the place where he was crucified. The prose-poems of the anthology recollect Heaney's childhood. In the poem 'Nesting-Ground', the speaker stands alone with the desire to listen to the silence beneath the ground.

> As he stood sentry, gazing, waiting, he thought of putting his ear to one of the abandoned holes and listening for the silence under the ground.
>
> (ll 10-12, Nesting-Ground, *Stations*)

The description is evocative of the contemporary condition of Ireland. Nesting are fledglings who have yet not acquired flight feathers and are therefore unable to fly and leave the nest. Ironically the speaker finds no birds in 'abandoned holes'. The implication here is that the nesting have been caught, killed or forced to leave their nests. The condition can be equated to that of Irish people who, too, have been caught, killed or forced to leave their homes and belongings because of colonial carnage.

The narrator is stunned into being a mute listener and a silent victim. The position is somewhat a compromised one with almost no endeavour for compensations. The compromised attitude is carried forward in other poems of the anthology. The poem 'July' describes the 12th July march of Orangemen. The Orange Order was born in

Armagh in 1795 as part of the colonial tactic of the armed terror campaign to deny full citizenship rights to Catholics. This was in the context of struggles between landlords and tenants in the area.

The sectarian attacks that accompany the Orange marches today date back to its genesis. In 1795, thousands of Catholics were made roofless and driven out of Armagh by Orangemen. Indeed the Orange Order played a key role in ensuring the failure of the 1798 rebellion. The march often sparks riots between the two communities. Right from the start the parades have been accompanied by violence as they attempt to force their way through the Catholic dominated areas. Reuter reported in *The Epoch Times*, 11 July 2006:

> Each year thousands of Orangemen march through Northern Irish Streets to booming accompaniment of drums and pipes wearing colourful regalia to celebrate the 1690 defeat in battle of Catholic King James II by Protestant William of Orange.[2]

Drew Nelson, the Grand Secretary of Orange Order Protestant fraternity formed in 1795, commented on the issue 'The marches are celebration of our continued survival as a community in this island and a celebration of our freedom to express our culture in this way'.[3]

For Protestants, the July march might be a way to express their culture but for Catholics, it is an insignia of cultural subjugation which harks back to the memory of the defeat. The strategy is simple. In order to prevent Protestants from identifying with their Catholic neighbours, the order created an anti-Catholic society, headed by the wealthy Protestants, which offered all Protestants a place in its ranks, with promises of promotion and privilege. The beating of the drums is a symphony of fun and frolic for the Orangemen but for the Catholics, it is cacophony. The poem is written from the Catholic point of view. The ecclesiastical elements heighten the suggestion of a poetic pilgrimage undertaken to uncover the long neglected national consciousness. Heaney integrates the religious and national impluses. The very remote Celtic past is excavated and submerged memory produces contemporary knowledge and a vision of the future.

> Through red seas of July the Orange drummers led a chosen people through their dream. Dilations and engorgings, contrapuntal; slashers in shirt-sleeves, collared in the sunset, policemen flanking them like anthracite.
>
> The air grew dark, cloud barred, a butcher's apron. The night hushed like a white-mothed reach of water, miles down-stream from the battle, a skein of blood still lazing in the channel.
>
> (ll 10-17, July, *Stations*)

The march is held every year on 12th July and it reminds the poet of the colonial divisions between the two communities. The original inhabitants of Northern Ireland are Catholics. The Protestant came as colonizers. The British Empire controlled Ireland through military and political compulsions. They operated the classical colonial divide and rule policy in Ireland using partition into Six and Twenty-six counties where the Empire claimed jurisdiction over Six counties.

The Orange Order demand their inherited right to march on the Queen's highway, as their forefathers before them have done, in commemoration of the victory of King William of Orange at the battle of the Boyne - a victory for religious and civil liberty. Nationalists, on the other hand, see the Orange Parades as nothing more than an exercise designed to remind the Catholic population of their marginalized position and to forward the message that Northern Ireland is an Orange state and that nationalists are and will always remain subjugated and marginalized in that state.The process of the march and its psychological impact on the Catholic community is narrated in the poem. However no compensation is asked. It exhibits a stoical and compromised attitude. The reasons might be the weakness on the political as well as the social front. The Catholics belong to a minority community in Northern Ireland.

> WELCOME HOME YE LADS OF THE EIGHTY ARMY. There had to be some defiance in it because it was painted along the demesne wall, a banner headline over the old news of REMEMBER 1690 and NO SURRENDER, a great wingspan of lettering I hurried under with this message.
>
> (ll 1-5, Trail Runs, *Stations)*

The 1690 defeat was a landmark in the colonial history of Ireland. The Catholics were deprived and suppressed at almost all levels. Heaney in the poem 'Trial Runs' is forced to think about the historical subjugation when he sees 'a banner headline over the old news of REMEMBER 1690 and NO SURRENDER' which was put up probably to psychologically pressurize the Catholic community and remind them of their second-class existence in the country. The defeat* reminds him of cultural subjugation.

In 'England's Difficulty', Heaney talks about his ambivalent position. Majority of the population in Northern Ireland identifies with two ideologies, unionist (those who want the region to remain the part of U.K) and nationalist (those who want a united Ireland). Unionists are mainly Protestant, most of who belong to the Presbyterian Church of Ireland. Nationalists are predominantly Roman Catholics. His poetry represents a kind of linguistic digging and ploughing of experience to recover the truth.

The political and topographical divisions of the country are too much for Heaney who originally is a poet of agrarian sentiments.

> I moved like a double agent among the big concept
>
> (ll 1, England's Difficulty, *Stations)*

The dilemma to choose his strand makes him stand between the "big concepts" of colonial politics. On one hand he laments the loss of Irish culture as a consequence of English colonization but on the other hand he owes a great debt to English language which made him famous and took his works across the globe. Globalization has made

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* King William III (1689-1694) landed in Ireland and defeated King James's (1685-1688) army at the River Boyne. King James (1685-1688) left Ireland for France a few days later never to return. The Irish Protestant parliament over the next fifty years passed laws to prevent Catholics from becoming members of parliament, becoming lawyers, going to university, joining the navy or taking public posts. Catholics are not allowed to own a horse valued over five pounds. Catholic schools are forbidden. Sons who became Protestant could take over their parent's property and use it as they want. Pope Alexander VIII (189-1691) condemned the Jesuit belief that denied the necessity of an explicit act of love for God after attainment of reason. Also condemned is the Jesuit belief that no sin is involved if committed without knowledge or thought. He also condemned 31 Jansenist propositions.[4]

English a link language for the world. Heaney uses English not to speak for the colonizers but to speak against them. The concept of a concrete linguistic identity places him as 'a double agent' caught between the inherited Irish language and the adopted English language. The poem is littered with the debris of imagery of World War II. The policy of Irish neutrality was adopted by the Parliament of Ireland. It refrained from joining either the Allies or the Axis powers. The strained relations with the Empire after the partial independence were the major cause of the neutrality. Heaney, then, was still a child. He recollects the German bombing on Belfast.

> 'When the Germans bombed Belfast it was the bitterest Orange parts were hit the worst.'
>
> I was on somebody's shoulder, conveyed through the starlit yard to see the sky glowing over Anahorish. Grown-ups lowered their voices and resettled in kitchen as if tired out after an excursion.
>
> (ll 5-10, England's Difficulty, *Stations*)

Although, the Republic of Ireland declared its neutral stand, Northern Ireland, being a part of United Kingdom, was at war. The Germans Luftwaffe bombers attacked Belfast, killing more than a thousand. More were injured. The houses were destroyed. The bombing is recorded as the greatest loss of life in a single night raid during the Belfast Blitz.

The military imagery continues in 'Visitant', where Heaney deals with a 'foreigner' soldier of the war. For the unlettered peasants, he was a curious personality who came to their field 'awkwardly smiling' and he was 'awkwardly received' by them. He would spend 'the long Sunday afternoon just by sitting with us [them]'. The soldier seems to find solace and comfort in the company of the peasants. He would get rid of his 'fatigues' of the war in their company. In the rural environment, he found a compensatory spiritual relief from the psychological pressures of the war.

> Where are you now, real visitant, who vivified 'parole''
> and 'POW?
>
> (ll 6-7, Visitant, *Stations*)

Heaney paints a humane picture of a rural world where the peasants are busy in their agrarian activities, enjoying their leisure in the fields. They are almost oblivious of the scenario outside their green world until the solider arrives. They belong to two completely different worlds yet the peasants discuss the crucial concepts of war with the solider. Through him, they become acquainted with warfare-terminology such as 'parole', conditional release of the prisoners, and 'POW', the prisoner of war concept. The soldier leaves them to decide 'the particular judgements of captor and harbourer'.

The poem makes an attempt to understand and contrast the two binary opposite worlds. The peasants and the soldier made few adjustments to understand each others. The implication is that one has to make some adjustments and compromises to understand and adapt to others.

'The Wanderer' deals with Heaney's departure from his first school. The poem is a recollection of a childhood incident of 'winning the scholarship' and moving 'away to Derry' for higher studies. Since then, there was no looking back for the poet. He has 'wandered far...and would not renegue on ...migrant solitude'. His educational achievements have made him a renowned poet. He, now, has the powers over words with which he can articulate the pathetic condition of his country.

> That day I was rich youngman, who could tell you now of flittings, night-vigils, let-downs, women's cried out eyes.
>
> (ll 11-13, The Wanderer, *Stations*)

The lines are evocative of the condition of Northern Ireland. 'Famous Seamus' has reached a position where the whole literary circle is waiting to hear from him. He wants to utilize this platform to present truthfully the psychological traumas, tensions and miserable condition of his people. He would 'now' write about the turmoil that resulted in moving house, police patrolling, and the sad tears of the women of his country. Heaney is the poet of the people and the community. He narrates the sufferings of the Irish and other marginalized communities of the world.

Heaney feels nostalgic for the old Irish tongue in the poem 'The Stations of the West'. He went to Gaeltacht, a region where Gaelic is spoken by the majority of people, to 'inhale the absolute weather'. In Gaeltacht, the old women spoke to Heaney in English. Old people are always associated with traditions and culture. The old woman's address in English creates a sense of loss and a cultural void in the poet's mind. Heaney sat on bedside and listened 'through the wall to the fluent Irish'. The linguistic colonization suppressed the original Gaelic language of Ireland. Irish or Irish Gaelic is the oldest of Goidelic group of Celtic languages. It is chiefly spoken in the western and southwestern parts of Ireland, where it is an official language, and to some extent in Northern Ireland. In the past century, the number of Irish-speaking people has declined from 50 percent of the population of Ireland to less than 20 percent. The 'fluent Irish' makes him 'homesick'. He feels like an 'extirpate' to the language. In his own country, his native language is under threat. The loss is however compensated, to some extent, through memory of some favourite locations in Ireland delineated in sharp detail.

> But still
> I would recall the stations of the west, white sand, hard rock,
> light ascending like its definition over Rannafast and Errigal,
> Annaghry and Kincasslagh
>
> (ll 12-16, The Stations of the West, *Stations*)

Heaney in his early writing used the pseudonym 'Incertus', which was also his school nickname. He 'disguised in it'. He was probably uncertain of the success of his writings as he belonged to a rural family and no intention of profiting from writing poetry. He compensated with the use of a pseudonym. He claims that he 'crept before I [he] walked'. The institution that introduced 'Famous Seamus' to the literary circle, was the London publishing house Faber and Faber, which published his first anthology when the poet was twenty-seven. In a career of more than forty years, Heaney has become a poet who needs no introduction in the contemporary literary world and his 'pseudonym lies ... like a mouldering tegument'.

Field Work (1979)

Field Work (1979) is a miscellaneous anthology that pieces together a wide spectrum of political and pastoral poems, love poems, elegies and translations. *Field Work* is a product of the years in the 'hedge school' as Heaney writes in the Glanmore Sonnets. A number of poems in the anthology are marked with the awareness of the relationships between the personal, the political and the historical. In an interview with Frank Kinahan, Seamus Heaney remarked:

> *Field Work* was an attempt to try to do something deliberately: to change the note and to lengthen the line, and to bring elements of my social self, element of my usual nature.... In *Field Work*, I was hoping I could get a technique to fortify the quotidian into work.... I gave *Field Work* that title partly because there's an element of different sampling in it. [6]

In the anthology's opening poem, 'Oysters', the act of relishing food reminds Heaney of colonial domination and of subjugation of Irish culture. These oysters, 'Alive and Violated' and 'ripped and shucked and scattered' brings back the memories of the Romans and also the savagery of European Colonial history.

> Over the Alps, packed deep in hay and snow,
> The Romans hauled their oysters south to Rome
>
> (ll 16-17, Oysters, *FW*)

Time stands as a mute testimony to the gluttony of man. For the satisfaction of greed and gluttony, human beings have intruded upon and violated the harmony of the natural world. The secret underground world of oceans in the same way was encroached upon. The oysters have suffered such human oppressions for centuries.

From ancient Roman culture to contemporary days, oysters have been regarded as an expensive delicacy. The oyster culture of ancient Rome is often alluded to in the Roman Classics. The oysters were cultivated artificially and transported to other places. Relishing oysters was a status symbol for the Romans who are described as incorrigible

gluttons over the millennia. It is said that some of their lavish feasts lasted for hours. Food is an essential component of our lives and a means of survival but it also carries loads of political and social ideologies. It is a marker of identity, culture and values. The eating habits are intrinsic to a culture. Food and drink contribute to the construction of cultural narratives. For postcolonial writers, it becomes a means to write back against the dominant discourses. Gluttony, one of the seven cardinal sins, be it for food, lust or wealth is responsible for oppressions. The colonizers, seen from postcolonial lens, prove themselves to be gluttons and out of their lust for power and wealth, they ruined the perfectly synchronized rural Irish culture. The eating of oysters, for Heaney, triggers colonial expansionism on Ireland. They are seen as 'Frond-lipped, brine-stung' indulging in the 'Glut of privilege'.

The major crop of Ireland is the potato and it is the 'common man's food'. Heaney regards it as a part of the cultural heritage of Ireland and links to rural identity. With the advent of contemporary theories in the field of literary and cultural studies, the concept of identity has gained importance. The theories of Freud and Lacan have given impetus to psychoanalytic studies. Identity is evolved in relation to the surroundings which include parents, family and friends. In the process of imitation the one's identity is also formed. As a process, 'Identity is located in the core of individual, in the core of his or her communal culture-hence making a connection between community and individual'. [7]

Michael Foucault's observations that individuals posses interwoven multiple identities has given new dimensions to identity formation. The implication is that multiple identities exist in relation to a range of social practices that are linked to larger structures like race, ethics and community. Potatoes symbolize the poet's family tradition, the agricultural economy of his country and remind him of the Irish famine. The delicacy of eating oysters in 'cool thatch and crockery' is apparently civilized act. To the poet however, it reeks of colonial divisions and senseless pride. The poem ends with anger which grows from deep seated resentment. The poet's anger incorporates universal elements.

And was angry that my trust could not repose
In the clear light

(ll 21-22, Oysters, *FW*)

The shadows of old colonial conflicts surround the poems of the sequence 'Triptych', which follows 'Oysters'. Triptych is a painting or carving that has three panels especially one over an altar in a church. The sequence 'Triptych' euphemistically depicts the violence of the Northern Irish 'Troubles'. The first poem, 'After a Killing', was written after the murder of Christopher Ewart-Beggs, the British ambassador to Ireland, in July 1976. The poem mirrors the resultant turbulence and violence. The fearful representation strikes notes of terror. The so-called 'saviors' frighten and subdue.

...the unquiet founders walked again:
Two young men with rifles on hills,
Profane and bracing as their instrument

(ll 2-4, 'After a Killing', Tripych, *FW*)

The 'unquiet founders' refers to the members of I.R.A (Irish Republican Army). Heaney supported the mission of freedom but he is against the ways in which the mission is carried out by I.R.A. He aims at combating colonial forces through negotiations rather than violence. The violent and chaotic mood of the poem is softened through the images of natural beauty. 'Broad window light' and the girl walking with 'basket full of new potato' brings relief to the dark militarily imagery and turbulent atmosphere of the poem.

In 'Sibyl', Heaney shows concern for his people and questions 'what will become of us?' The people, indifferent to the plight of the local, are classed as mercenaries abandoning a bleeding country. The image of 'bleeding tree' captures the injury and pain of a people destroyed by the colonizer.

...My people think money
And talk weather. Oil rigs lull their future.

(ll 13-14, Sibyl, *FW*)

The concluding lines of the poem are an ironical modification of Caliban's speech from Shakespeare's *Tempest.*

> Be not afeard: the isle is full of noises,
> Sounds and sweet air, that gives delight, and hurt not.[8]

Heaney's modification 'Our island is full of comfortless noises' aptly depicts the contemporary situation of Ireland. Like Caliban's isle, Ireland too is full of noises and sounds but they are not sweet and delightful. 'Comfortlessness creates nostalgia for the peaceful past and also implies the gravity of current problems. The sounds of gun-shots and explosions echoes in every corner of the country. In the concluding poem of the sequence, 'At the Water's Edge', Heaney's locale is Lough Erne which is one of the oldest inhabited sites in Ireland. He stands there and witnesses the commotion.

> I watched the sky beyond the open chimney
> And listened to the thick rotations,
> Of an army helicopter patrolling.
>
> (ll 10-12, At the Water's Edge, *FW*)

Heaney, as an apostle of peace, has a religious desire to bow before the Almighty. He recommends the supreme Christian virtues of forgiveness and peace. He yearns to heal the conflicts and divisions of the earth and makes it a better place to live in. He desires that 'forgiveness finds its nerve and voice'.

> ...Everything in me
> Wanted to bow down, to offer up,
> To go bare foot, foetal and penitential,
>
> And pray at the Water's Edge.
>
> (ll 14-17, At the Water's Edge, *FW*)

The concluding lines 'The helicopter shadowing our march at Newry' refers to the British helicopter march at Newry which followed as a protest against Bloody Sunday which took place on 30th of January in 1972. A march was organized by NICRA (Northern Ireland Civil Right Association) formed in 1967 against the interment, which was introduced in 1971, and the ban on marches was imposed in Derry. I.R.A (Irish Republican Army) had promised to stay away to make the march peaceful. In order to prevent the marchers from entering the city centre square, British soldiers had put barricades. Few marchers and some observers confronted the soldiers manning the barricade. As a result British troopers opened fire killing fourteen and injuring thirteen others.

The resistance to colonial marginalization results in possessiveness of their belongings by the natives. Heaney registers intimacy with 'The Toome Road'. The intimacy develops into possessiveness as a result of the native's challenge to the British soldiers:

> How long were they approaching down my roads
> As if they owned them?
>
> (ll 5-6, The Toome Road, *FW*)

Heaney emphasizes that as the original inhabitant of Ireland he has 'right-of-way, fields, cattle in my [his] keeping'. Heaney is not ready to surrender and compromise with the colonial oppressions but his plight is that he has nobody to share his burden with and to support his nationalistic consciousness.

His country men are fast asleep 'with their back doors on the latch'. The sleep is literal as well as metaphorical. Devoid of the nationalistic feeling the people are frightened, subjugated and indifferent to their own resources. The Toome Road, with its association with the rebellion of 1798, is a place that epitomizes the Irish nationalism and the 'untoppled omphalos', which is a navel-stone at Delphi, the oracular shrine of Apollo, and which serves as a signifier of nationalistic feeling with its defiant opposition to the

colonial dominations. Heaney believes in peaceful compromises rather than hateful revenges and antagonism. In the elegies which he wrote for the people who were killed in the contemporary violence, his attitude is sympathetic and caring towards the victims.

'The Strand at Lough Beg' was written as an elegy in the memory of Heaney's cousin Colum McCartney who was shot dead in 1975. The elegy confronts the true circumstances of sectarian murder. The cousin, victim of a random sectarian shooting, is a gory sight 'with blood and roadside muck in your [his] hair and eyes'. Heaney gives historical and mythical dimensions to his cousin's story by alluding to Sweeney, a character from Irish mythology, flying over 'bloodied heads'. Heaney acknowledges that they are calm and peaceful people who are incapable of standing up against the sectarian forces.

> For you and yours and yours and mine fought shy,
> Spoke an old language of conspirators
> And could not crack the whip or seize the day:
>
> (ll 23-25, The Strand at Lough Beg, *FW*)

Casting himself and his cousin in the figures of Dante and Virgil from Canto I of *Purgatorio*, Heaney prepares the dead man for the burial. As Virgil washed away the filth and dust of Hell from Dante's face, so Heaney does from his cousin's face. The archetypal washing releases his cousin from all worldly bondage.

> And gather up cold handful of the dew
> To wash you, cousin. I dab you clean with moss
> Fine as the drizzle out of a low cloud.
> I lift you under the arms and lay you flat
> With rushes that shoot green again, I plait
> Green scapulars to wear over your shroud.
>
> (ll 39-44, The Strand at Lough Beg, *FW*)

Preparing the dead for a dignified burial is the greatest respect which a living man can impart. Heaney humanism reaches a philanthropist peak. The shrouding of the dead cousin can be read as the binary opposition and as a compensation for the colonizer's

practice of depriving the dead natives of shrouds. The rebel Croppies Boys in 'Requiem for Croppies' were buried sans shrouds. The demeaning strategies were extended even to the dead.

In the elegy 'In Memoriam Francis Ledwidge', Heaney remembers Francis Ledwidge (19th August 1887- 31st July 1917), an Irish poet who was also named 'The poet of blackbirds', who was killed in France on 31 July 1917. He was a dedicated patriot and a nationalist. The Irish people were divided into two groups by World War I in 1914. The first group was of those volunteers who wished to fight in the war and the other group was of those who were against fighting in the war. Francis belonged to the former group but later went to the war as he was not ready to compromise with the silent ideologies of the former group. On 31st July, Ledwidge was reparing the road along with the other members of battalion where a shell exploded killing Ledwidge and five other members. Heaney recalls his 'Tommy's uniform' and 'Catholic haunted face, pallid and brave'. Heaney laments his fate on account of the political divisions that created a gap. Francis Ledwidge becomes the 'dead enigma'.

> 'To be called a British soldier while my country
> Has no place among nations...'
>
> (ll 37-38, In Memoriam Francis Ledwidge, *FW*)

Heaney condemns the hypocrisy of British Empire. The 'common funeral' of the thirteen dead of the Bloody Sunday is the focal action of the elegy, 'Casualty'. The elegy is written in the memory of Louis O' Neill and the victims of reprisal killing by British Army. O'Neill was blown up in the bombing when he broke the curfew imposed by I.R.A.

> He was blown to bits
> Out drinking in a curfew
>
> (ll 38-39, Casualty , *FW*)

The constant confinement in his own home proved too much for the simple man who broke the 'tribe's complicity'. Heaney contemplates on O'Neill's decision of going out and breaking the curfew. He asks himself: 'How culpable was he / That last night

when he broke / Our tribe's complicity?'. The series of questions points at a series of atrocities. When one member of the community is blown to bits, other becomes victims of fear psychosis. They are terrified of even routine activities. It becomes difficult for the poet to gauge who suffered the worst fate- the dead or the living. Heaney describes the funeral day as 'a day of cold / Raw silence'. In a nightmarish rendering, coffins after coffins were taken to the burial ground. O'Neill was dear to Heaney who 'loved his [O'Neill] whole manner'. Yet the elegy talks of no plan for revenge or retaliation towards the worst atrocities of the British Army. Heaney is trying to propagate that violence and wars beget more violence and wars. He advocates peaceful compromises and suggests combating violence through non-violence, as done by the apostles of peace like M.K Gandhi, Mother Teresa and Nelson Mandela.

Jahan Ramzani comments on the differences between the traditional elegy and the modern one:

> If the traditional elegy was an art of saving, the modern elegy is what Elizabeth Bishop calls an 'art of losing'. Instead of resurrecting the dead in some substitute, instead of curing them through displacement, modern elegist 'practice farther, losing faster' so that the 'One Art' of the modern elegy is not transcendence or redemption of loss but immersion in it. [9]

Robert Lowell, who has been an inspiration for Heaney, is recalled with filial respect in 'Elegy', 'you found the child in me / when you took farewells / under the full bay tree / by the gate in Glanmore'. Heaney constantly appeals to mankind to protect children. Through the elegies Heaney brings home the hatred and horror of the sectarian violence. The poet dreams of a peaceful future where, society is not divided by narrow, sectarian walls, where the dew drops are not used to clean the dust from the faces of murdered Irishmen but to quench the thirst of humanity, where he brings clothes not to use as shrouds but to cover the bodies of the poor and needy. The contrast between the real and the implied shocks the readers out of apathy.

The sequence of ten 'Glanmore Sonnets' marks his move from violence-ridden Belfast to the serene and calm environment of Co. Wicklow. Heaney moved away from

the concrete jungles and the hustle-bustle of the urban to the 'redolence / Of farmland'. The poet always longed for the countryside where he felt revived and nourishes his thought processes. His moving can be interpreted as a compensation. It symbolizes a return to the roots.

Heaney's colonial consciousness and concern for his country is reflected in the Glanmore Sonnets as well. Amidst the serene and calm scenes, there emerge descriptions of colonial exploitations. In the first sonnet of the sequence, the phrase 'opened ground' is used which refers back to 'Act of Union' of *North*, where it symbolized the wound inflicted by the 'Male' England on female Ireland. The metaphor of rape is used to communicate the brutality, savagery and total inhumanity that is involved in the colonizing processes. The patriarchy excommunicated women who were the victims of sexual violence. The criminal role of the man was never highlighted. Similarly the conquered people are subjugated by the colonizers.

Writing poetry, for Heaney, means plunging into the depths of reality which otherwise remains unfathomable. The 'ground' symbolizes the hidden reality which is 'ploughed' by the 'vowels' through the tongue of poetry. The poet realized the colonial arbitrariness and motivations. As a result, he chooses to be a 'digger', who digs down the layers of history, culture and identity to reveal historical amnesia. These subversive strategies are employed by the postcolonial writers to dismantle the hegemonic configurations of the dominant. Writers such as George Lamming, Chinua Achebe, Wilson Harris and V.S Naipaul have attacked the hegemony of the Empire. Yet Heaney schools himself at 'hedge-school of Glanmore', to 'dispel' hatred and 'hold' and spread human values which he imbibed in the 'hedge-school'.

> Then I landed in the hedge-school of Glanmore
> And from the backs of ditches hoped to raise...
>
> (ll 9-10, Glanmore Sonnets II , *FW*)

Glanmore Sonnets are Heaney's acknowledgement of the English lyrical tradition and of the influence of Wordsworth with whom he shares the dilemma of political

turmoil. In his book *Redress of Poetry*, in the essay 'Place and Displacement', Heaney cites Wordsworth as a poet who voices the same predicament. When in 1791 England declared war with France, Wordsworth

> suffered a dislocation which corresponded to much that still happens in the Irish situation. Here was the revolutionary sympathizer whose political ideals were French but whose nation was England... And, of course, the poem in which Wordsworth reports the trauma is the very poem whose composition was part of the process of healing the trauma. *The Prelude* is about a conscious coming together through the effort of articulating the conflict and crisis. And same could be said of much poetry from Northern Ireland.[10]

Heaney alludes to Wordsworth in the sonnet II.

> Sensing, mountings, from the hiding places,
> Words entering almost the sense of touch
>
> (ll 1-2, Glanmore Sonnets II , *FW*)

In *The Prelude*, Wordsworth talks of the 'hiding place of my power' and 'enshrine the spirit of the past / For future restoration'. In 'Glanmore Sonnets', Heaney, in the traditions of Romantic, recollects the past. Following in the footsteps of Wordsworth, Heaney recollects the simple and ordinary pleasures of rural life. The past embalms perfect values. Through a poetic return Heaney desires to resurrect them and thus reform the modern world. The 'Glanmore Sonnets' are cluttered with Wordsworthian influence. Anne Stevenson comments:

> Heaney ... could not and would not have written quite as he has, had it not been for the example of Wordsworth....For Wordsworth we have the first instance in Britain of a poet in retreat of a corrupting society and a doubtful religion, digging in and fortifying the bastions of his own psyche.[11]

In Sonnet III, Heaney is about to make direct comparison between himself and his wife in 'strange loneliness' to William and Dorothy but his comparison is terminated

unfinished with his wife's interruption. Sonnet IV recollects the universal childhood game of listening to the sound of an approaching train by bending close to the railway track. The child in Heaney's sonnet misses the 'iron tune' of the train when he puts his ears on the railway line. The incident is recollected and written in poetry by the adult. The adult invasion of the childhood world is a recurrent theme in Heaney's poetry.

Apart from Wordsworth, other allusions to the English literary tradition, in 'Glanmore Sonnets', includes Philip Sidney's *Apology for Poetry* in sonnet X, Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* in Sonnet X, and Wyatt's 'They flee from me'.

In 'The Singer's House', Heaney brings together the salt-mining culture of the seaport Carrickfergus and the singer's house in Gweebarra implying a harmony between the divisions of the North and the South. The poem was written as an appeal to another artist, his singer friend, David Hammond, when he canceled his recording session because of a bombing. Heaney wishes to persuade his friend not to give up as his voice could inspire and encourage his people.

> When I came here first you were always singing,
> a hint of the clip of the pick
> in your winnowing climb and attack.
> Raise it again, man. We still believe what we hear.
>
> (ll 29-32, The Singer's House , *FW*)

The poem carries silent emblems of hope and possibility. The singer's voice would inspire and compensate for the human loss. The loss of human values has always been Heaney's primary concern. Modernization has brought the world to a position where human ethics hold no value and are always at the receiving end. In 'The Guttural Muse', Heaney laments the loss of genuine love which has been replaced by lust. Heaney feels sad after he 'watched a young crowd leave the discotheque'. The young crowd indifferent to their culture and traditions are busy merry making. They indulge in sex which has simply become a mechanical entertainment.

A girl in white dress
Was being courted out among the cars:
As her voice swarmed and puddle into laughs

(ll 11-13, The Guttural Muse, *FW*)

Heaney, witnessingthe cultural degeneration of the younger generation, 'feels like some old pike all badged with sores'. He belongs to an older generation whose morals and manners are treated as a burden by the young. Generation gap is a universal truth. There seems to be no compensation for the loss of human values except for the compromises with the 'sores' inflicted upon the old traditions and culture and a compensatory desire for 'soft-mouth life'.

The theme of the last poem 'Ugolino' is taken from Dante's *Inferno* (canto XXXII, XXXIII). Ugolino is one of the damned whom Dante placed in the ninth circle of hell. Ugolino is an epitome of man's capacity for evil and brutality. Ugolino's lust for power made him treacherous. In Dante's version, Ugolino makes no efforts to exonerate himself of the betrayal of his country. Instead he is presented as a cannibal chewing on the skull of his enemy Ruggiero, the Archbishop of Pisa. Heaney alludes to Dante and re-situates Ugolino in hell. Through the narrative of Ugoino, the poet voices a moral and political critique of violence and the everlasting series of hatred, revenge and violence in Ireland. The allusions mirror the sectarian violence of the Northern Ireland of 1970s in particular and Irish genocide from the Saxon oppressors, famine victims and the political divisions of Northern Ireland in general. For Heaney, Ugolino's cannibalism and hell seems to fit the Irish context. In Heaney's version Dante addresses Ugolino in a series of questions.

'You,' I shouted, 'you on top, what hate
Makes you so ravenous and insatiable?
What keeps you so monstrously at rut?
Is there any story I can tell
For you, in the world above, against him?
If my tongue by then's not withered in my throat
I will report the truth and clear your name!'

(ll 10-16, Ugolino, *FW*)

The series of questions hint towards the initiative of negotiations. Since compromises are based on negotiation, Heaney portrays Ugolino as the colonial power, full of hatred and brutality and Heaney wishes to know the reason behind the cruelty. He narrates the injustices doled out by Ugolino to his own children. The poet localizes and historicizes the narrative to suit the Irish historical situations.

> Gnawing at him where the neck and head
> Are grafted to the sweet fruit of the brain,
> Like a famine victim at a loaf of bread.
>
> (ll 4-6, Ugolino, *FW*)

The reference is to the Irish famine of 1845 in which the potato crop was infected with a disease and half the crop failed. The other agricultural products such as wheat and oats and the other resources such as beef, mutton, pork and poultry were taken and shipped out of the country by the British landowners for profit. The economic condition of the Irish peasant went from bad to worse in the years 1846 and 1847 leaving the people starving. The British Empire turned a deaf ear to the plight and refused to help the starving people and continued to ship the produce abroad. In the dreadful event many people migrated to other countries and more than one and a half million starved to death. Heaney strikes a parallel between the colonizer's unresponsive attitude towards the Irish and Ugolino's failure as a father and his neglect of moral responsibilities. The historical Count Ugolino had two sons and two grandsons who went along with him to prison. The starvation and deaths occur before the eyes of the emotionally barren Ugolino. Instead of protecting and supporting the imprisoned children, Ugolino remains indifferent. This is a betrayal of great enormity – father betraying his sons:

> Shut, far down in the nightmare tower.
> I stared in my sons's face and spoke no word
> My eyes were dry and my heart was stony.
>
> (ll 63-65, Ugolino, *FW*)

But I shed no tears, I made no reply
All through that day, all through the night that followed
Until another sun blushed in the sky

(ll 68-70, Ugolino, *FW*)

The colonizers ruled Ireland and morally it was their duty to take care of the needs of the Irish people but the truth was that the exploitation reached its peak during the famine years. In the words of John Freccero, Ugolino's 'tragedy is a failure of interpretation, as well as an inability to accept the suffering of his children'[12]. Heaney holds Ugolino responsible for the death of his children. The theme of paternal rejection is earlier taken up by Heaney in the poem 'Limbo' and 'Bye child'. The fabric of any society is woven with the thread of responsibilities. In fact neither compromises can be made nor will any compensation work when it comes to the question of fulfilling responsibilities. Heaney wishes for a reformation which would work when people would understand and judge the moral and political damage done to the generations by the hostility of fathers.

You and your population. For the sins
Of Ugolino, who betrayed your forts,
Should never have been visited on his sons.

(ll 100-103, Ugolino, *FW*)

Heaney desires to terminate the unending cycle of revenge and hatred. He negotiates in order to make the people understand the result of violence. The opening poem of the anthology 'Oysters' begins with the eating of meal but the 'Ugolino' ends with hunger and starvation. The poem serves as a link with the next anthology '*Station Island*', which is structured upon Dante's *Commedia.*

Station Island (1984)

The conceptual model of Heaney's anthology *Station Island* is loosely structured on Dante's *The Divine Comedy.* In the previous anthology *Field Work* (1978), Heaney

translated a section from cantos xxxii and xxxiii of Dante's *Inferno*. From the very beginning of his career, Heaney used different Christian and pre-Christian, Greek, Irish and European myths in his poetry to reflect the politics, history and personal plight of the Irish people. In *Stations Island*, he follows Dante's technique of using of myths as embodiments of personal experiences. In an interview he comments:

> Poetry, lets us say, whether it belongs to an old political dispensation or aspires to express a new one, has to be a working model of inclusive consciousness. It should not simplify. Its projections and inventions should be a match for the complex reality which surrounds it and out of which it is generated. *The Divine Comedy* is a great example of this total adequacy... [14]

The anthology is divided into three sections. The first section consists of poems of significant moments, and memoirs and portraits of acquaintances. The second section, the title sequence itself, deals with encounters with the dead. The last section 'Sweeney Redivivus' is an amalgamation of the two as the seventh-century king transforms into a bird and surveys and meditates over the philosophies of love, art and war. Despite the divisions of different modes and moods, the presence of Sweeney provides unity to different sections of the anthology.

The first poem of the opening section is 'The Underground' suggesting the entrance to the inferno. He talks of the political reality, of his own self being the political outsider, in the poem 'Sandstone Keepsake'. The stone picked up at the beach at Inishowen, located on the northern tip of the Co. Donegal, in the opposite direction of Lough Foyle from Magilligan internment camp, gains mythological dimensions.

> It was ruddier, with an underwater
> hint of contusion, when I lifted it,
> wading a shingle beach on Inishowen,
> Across the estuary light after light
>
> came on silently round the perimeter
> of the camp. A stone from Phlegethon,
> bloodied on the bed of hell's hot river?

Evening frost and the salt water

(ll 5-12, Sandstone Keepsake, *SI*)

The Lough separates the Republic of Ireland from Northern Ireland. The description of Lough implies topographical as well as political divisions. The hostile image of the concentration 'camp' and the myth of 'hell's hot river', Phlegethon, reflects the barbarity of the wars. The poet being a political outsider can not undo the political victimization. His own inactivity and mental vacuum makes him aware of his inability to bring about major changes. He blames the 'free state' of Ireland for prompting the civil war. He is not against the freedom of Ireland but denounces barbarity of wars. The poem underlines the marginalized position of the political victim.

In order to escape the savagery and bloodthirstiness of the wars, Heaney makes a ritualistic 'morning offering' to absolve the world of the curse of war.

...I make morning offering again:
that I may escape the miasma of spilled blood,
govern the tongue, fear hybris, fear the god

(ll 3-5, Stone from Delphi, *SI*)

His prayer is for a peaceful society where the world is not choked with blood, gore and decaying dead bodies. In each incident and occurrence he is conscious of the plight of Ireland. A badly injured wild duck in the poem 'Widgeon' triggers the memory of the killing of the Irish in sectarian violence. The bird is 'badly shot' and the poet laments for its damaged 'voice box'. The voice of the poet serves as a compensation for the loss of innocent creature.

The impact of violence is seen everywhere in divided Ireland, which is torn apart by colonial forces. Heaney takes up the theme of deprived childhood, which is another marginal group, in the poem 'The Railway Children'. The thread bare existence of Irish children indulging in unsupervised, undesirable activities is earlier dealt with in the poem 'Blackberry-Picking' in the first anthology *'Death of a Naturalist'*. Education and

supervision play a vital role in the bringing up of children but the underprivileged Irish children were neglected on account of the constant turbulence. They simply played near the railway tracks. The railway was an invention that connected the world. In the violence-infested Northern Ireland it provided the children with a training ground for the worst of activities. Deep in their hearts the children desired to learn and the electric wires reminded them of the four-ruled exercise books.

> Like lovely freehand they curved for miles
> East and miles west beyond us...
>
> (ll 4-5,The Railway Children, *SI*)

In the small rain drops suspended from the wires the children could see the whole universe.

> In the shiny pouches of rain drops,
>
> Each one seeded full with the light
> Of the sky, the gleam of the lines, and ourselves
>
> (ll 9-11,The Railway Children, *SI*)

The poem is about the innocent world of childhood but it is written through the lens of a scrutinical adult vision. Heaney re-enters his childhood days and re-lives the painful and deprived past. The turmoil in Northern Ireland resulted in the disturbance of the routine of Irish life. The schools were closed most of the time. The poem puts on record the denial of the basic human rights to the Irish children.

In 'Making Strange', Heaney talks of class mobility which results from education. The binary opposition between the 'unshorn and bewildered' rural peasant 'in the tubs of his wellingtons' and the sophisticated 'stranger' with 'his traveled intelligence' is the consequence of education. The visitors have to be introduced to the old familiar world of 'puddles and stones'. Heaney borrows the title from Russian Formalist Victor Scklovsky's concept of 'defamilarisation' or '*ostranenie*'. Schlvosky claimed that it is

impossible to retain for long the freshness of vision of objects perceived. In 'Art as Technique' (1917), Schlvosky stated:

> The purpose of art is to impart the sensation of things as they are perceived, and not as they are known. The technique of art is to make the objects 'unfamiliar', to make forms difficult, to increase the difficulty and length of perception, because the process of perception is an aesthetic end in itself and must be prolonged. *Art is a way of experiencing the artfulness of an object; the object is not important.* (Schlvosky's emphasis)'[15]

'Making Strange' is a poetic process of enlarging and reshaping experience from known world. The Muse, referred to as 'a cunning voice', persuades the stranger to explain the natural world. The simplicities of the rural world of large lavish stretching green 'field across the road', of the smell of 'wind coming past the zinc hut', and of the pleasant beauty of 'sweetbriar after the rain' and the loveliness of 'snowberries cooled in the fog' has to be translated for the stranger:

> Then a cunning middle voice
> came out of the field across the road
> saying, 'Be adept and be dialect,
> tell of this wind coming past the zinc hut
>
> (ll 9-12,Making Strange, *SI*)

The sophistication and education of urbanity has always been contemptuous of the unsophisticated and unlettered rural existence. Rural life has its own unrivaled and mesmerizing charisma but its magic and hypnotizing beauty has to be brought forward before the world. Heaney's poem serves to compensate for the unsung and exotic beauty of country life.

The second section is the title sequence named after a place of pilgrimage of Irish Catholics. Station Island or St. Patrick's Purgatory is a small rocky isle in the middle of Lough Derg in Co. Donegal. It has been a destination of pilgrimage since medieval times. The 'stations' or 'beds' are believed to be the remains of ancient monastic cells. 'Station

Island' associates with the religion, traditions and culture of Irish Catholics. The twelve sections of the sequence are around the stations in which Heaney makes his journey. Dante's rendezvous with the ghosts in *Purgatorio* serves as a model for Heaney's poem. Heaney learned from Dante how to take advantage of what could otherwise be regarded as a disadvantage. Heaney, in the sequence, makes an imaginary pilgrimage to the Stations where he encounters a number of ghosts like Dante does in *Purgatorio*, a track about the resurgence of art. Heaney praised Dante in one of his essays:

> The way in which Dante could place himself in an historical world yet submit that world to scrutiny from a perspective beyond history, the way he could accommodate the political and the transcendent, this too encouraged my attempt at a sequence of poems which would explore the typical strains which the consciousness labours under in this country. The main tension is between two often contradictory commands: to be faithful to the collective historical experience and to be true to the recognitions of the emerging self. I hoped that I could dramatize these strains by meeting shades from my own dream-life who had also been inhabitants of actual Irish world. They could perhaps voice the claims of orthodoxy and the necessity to recognize those claims [16]

'Station Island' is peopled with the ghosts of 'inhabitants of actual Irish world' known to Heaney personally or writers through their works. There is a journey through Irish literature, through the poetry of Sweeney to the prose of William Carleton to James Joyce and finally to Heaney himself. Dante is exemplary for Heaney as both of them reanalyzed and re-imagined traditions. They never compromised with the prevailing traditions and compensated them by standing for their individual beliefs. Like Dante, Heaney has also been made into an exile by the colonial divisions of the country.

Heaven is a place of blessings, glad tidings and the rewards and compensation for the sufferings in the earthly life whereas hell is a place of punishment and sufferings where there are no compromises. Purgatory is a place where there is some possibility of transformation through repentance. Heaney is the noble poet concerned with the betterment of his people. Hence he provides them with a glimpse of purgatory.

In the curtain raiser of the sequence, a prelude to the pilgrimage itself, Simon Sweeney is encountered on Sunday. He is a figure from Heaney's childhood. For the child Heaney, he was an anxiety generating figure. At the very outset of the pilgrimage Heaney receives advice from him:

> As I drew behind them
> I was a fasted pilgrim,
> light-headed, leaving home
> to face into my station.
> 'Stay clear of all processions!'
>
> (ll 61-65,Station Island I , *SI*)

Sweeney's advise is for the 'crowd of shawled women' but 'the murmur of the crowd / and their feet slushing' opens 'a drugged path' for Heaney. In section II, the poltergeist is of William Carleton, the writer of sectarian prose, who renounced Catholicism after visiting Station Island in his youth. The 'aggravated man' or Carleton encounters Heaney on the road.

> someone walking fast in an overcoat
> and boots, bareheaded, big, determined
> in his sure haste along the crown of the road
>
> (ll 4-6,Station Island II , *SI*)

Carleton wrote *Lough Derg Pilgrim*, a prose account of the superstitions and barbarism of the pilgrimage as the three-day affair involves a self-punitive routine of prayers, fasting and walking barefoot on the stones of the remains of monastic cells. In the prose, Carleton mocked these rituals and called them unnecessary and futile. Heaney, in his imaginary encounter, acts in response:

> I said, as the thing came clear. 'Your *Lough Derg Pilgrim*
> haunts me every time I cross this mountain-
>
> (ll 15-16,Station Island II , *SI*)

Carleton justifies his stand:

> hard-mouthed Ribbonmen and Orange bigots
> made me into the old fork-tongued turncoat
> who mucked the byre of their politics.
>
> (ll 31-33,Station Island II , *SI*)

The hardships of the pilgrimage were not the only reason for renouncement of Catholicism by Carleton. The more important factor was the contemporary political scenario. The Orangism, the Protestant colonizer's policy of giving preferences to their own sect had influenced Carleton. He writes:

> If times were hard. I could be hard too.
> I made the traitor in me sink the knife.
> And maybe there's a lesson there for you,
>
> (ll 34-36,Station Island I , *SI*)

Everybody on this planet has some weaknesses. Carleton was no exception. Heaney, on the one hand, tries to dilute the charges on Carleton by explaining the circumstances under which Carleton committed the blasphemous deed of writing against Catholicism and on the other hand he compensates for the injured sentiments of Irish Catholics. Carleton sounds apologetic when he advises Heaney to learn a lesson from his mistake. Carleton is repentant of his *faux pas* desires to remain untarnished by his sins. He wishes for 'another life that cleans our element'. Heaney by placing Carleton in purgatory for cleansing his soul raises himself to saintly status.

In Section III of the sequence, the ghost of Agnes, sister of Heaney's father, who died of consumption when Heaney was still a child, is encountered. Heaney compensates for the loss of filial relations with his imaginary rendezvous with the deceased aunt. Heaney has always been close to his family. He grew up in the farmhouse at Mossbawm along with his nine siblings. The only books in the farmhouse belonged to his Aunt who was a trained typist. He celebrated festivals such as St. Patrick's Day with his family

members and other people from his community. Time passed and he became 'Famous Seamus', yet he continued longing for the singing, recreation and festivals of his united family.

In Segment IV, Heaney encounters the spirit of a 'young priest, glossy as blackbird' who died on a foreign mission soon after his ordination. Heaney knew him since he was 'a clerical student'. The clerics in Catholicism are responsible for the ratification of the society. The people 'would be ratified / when they saw you [the priest] at the door in your [his] black suit'. In this section Heaney mediates over the religious responsibilities of the priest in the Irish society. Section V introduces Heaney's school teacher '*Master Murphy*'. With the figure of Barney Murphy, Heaney recollects the locale of his bygone days. He recreates his own old school at Anahorish, which he regards as 'purgatory enough for any man', and his uncle's farm at Toome. He travels down the memory lane and recollects the advice:

> *When you're on the road*
> *Give lifts to the people, you'll always learn something.*
>
> (ll 54-55,Station Island V , *SI*)

In a healthy society, everybody has an individual and imperative function to perform. In these sections Heaney, through his imaginary meetings, contemplates the role of supervision. Sexual curiosity is referred to in the following confessional segment:

> Until the night I saw her honey-skinned
> Shoulder blades and the wheatlands of her back
> Through the wide keyhole of her keyhole dress
>
> (ll 32-34,Station Island VI , *SI*)

The fulfillment of erotic desires by looking through the keyhole highlight the repressions within the old society and hint at complex and nasty psychological compensations of a curious young boy. Heaney lays bare the skeleton in the closet.

The next encounter is with the ghost of an 'unthinkable victim', of a sectarian murder in Northern Ireland, in section VII. The wounds were still fresh on his body, 'His brow / was blown open above the eye and blood / had dried on his neck and cheek'. The victim yearns for a healing touch. He needs no medical assistance but compensation from Heaney. He is none other than William Strathearn who played football with Heaney in his youth. He was murdered by two policemen in Co. Antrim. Heaney develops ambivalent feelings. His portrayal of Strathearn's appearance is rendered painfully:

> Through life and death he had hardly aged
> There always was an athlete's cleanliness
> shinning off him, and except for the ravage
>
> forehead and the blood, he was still that same
> rangy midfielder in a blue jersey
> and starched pants, the one stylist on the team.
>
> (ll 70-75,Station Island VII , *SI*)

Heaney blames his own compromises and 'timid circumspect involvement' in politics and apologizes as a compensation.

> 'Forgive the way I have lived indifferent-
> forgive my timid circumspect involvement,'
>
> (ll 77-78,Station Island VII , *SI*)

The rendezvous with filial and familiar continues in the section VIII of the sequence. He comes across Tom Delaney, his archeologist friend with 'face smiling its straight-lipped smile', who died at the age of thirty two and Colum McCartney, his murdered cousin a 'bleeding, pale-faced boy', the subject of his poem 'The Strand at Lough Beg'. Heaney is haunted with a sense of 'guilt and empty[ness]' as a result of compromises he has to make with the political situation. He feels that he 'had somehow broken / covenants and failed an obligation'. He seems to fall short of any kind of compensation for them. McCartney reprimands him for his failed obligations:

'... You were there with poets when you got the word
and stayed there with them, while your own flesh and blood
was carted to Bellaghy from the Fews.
They showed more agitation at the news
than you did.'

(ll 56-60,Station Island VIII, *SI*)

Heaney tries to absolve himself from the blame by giving excuses:

I was dumb, encountering was destined.

(ll 64,Station Island VIII, *SI*)

However no justification could compensate for the trauma of Heaney's cousin. He accused Heaney of 'confused evasion with artistic tact'. The cousin looks upon Heaney's political stand as one of the reasons behind his 'sectarian assassination'.

The protestant who shot me through the head
I accuse directly, but indirectly, you.

(ll 71-72,Station Island VIII, *SI*)

The poet is cast in the role of the people's protector. Like Christ he suffers for the mankind. Heaney makes the assassinated victims speak. He returns their voices but the words belong to Heaney himself. The confessional self-reflexive writing of Heaney shows that deep in his heart he is conscious of the guilt of his dumbness and wants to provide compensations through his poetry. These confessions communicate the compromises which he makes to unburden his heart, to compensate for the losses and to cleanse his soul in the hypothetical purgatory.

The IX segment begins with the spirit of Francis Hughes, one of the ten IRA hunger-strikers who died in Long Kesh prison. The political suicide was one of the tactics of the IRA to free their country from the colonial divisions. The last words of tragic suffering invoke empathy.

When the police yielded my coffin, I was light
As my head when I took the aim.

(ll 13-14,Station Island IX, *SI*)

The 'lightness' of the 'coffin' and the 'head' can be read literally as well as metaphorically. For the colonizers, the lives of the natives are worthless. For a colonized person who wishes to sacrifice for his motherland, the aim of life becomes focused and other burdens become light. The horrifying images such as 'blood on wet grass', 'shrouded feet', 'mucky, glittering flood', 'rose in a cobwebbed space' and stone 'eroding in bed' hints towards a decaying society but these are to be purified in the purgatory through repentance:

And I cried among night waters, 'I repent
My unweaned life that kept me competent
To sleepwalk with connivance and mistrust.'

(ll 35-37,Station Island IX, *SI*)

Heaney desires to be purged of 'connivance and mistrust'. The repentance is a psychological as well as spiritual compensation for his soul. As a result of repentance his 'feet touched bottom' and his 'heart revived'. The aspect of servitude of fills him with hatred. He begins to 'hate where I was born, hate everything / That made me biddable and unforthcoming'. The association with the native land is not to establish identity with a particular community or country, which is celebrated very often as an asset in his poetry. The hatred is a part of his confessions and rejections of certain morals and norms of the society which are responsible for Heaney's dumbness.

In section X, the spirit encountered is anonymous. Heaney's drinking mug is taken away from his childhood home by the actors to use as a 'prop' in a play and later the child Heaney is compensated through the miraculous return of the mug in the same way as 'Ronan's pslater' is 'miraculously' returned by an 'otter' in *Sweeney Astray*.

The emblem of sin and redemption is central to section XI of the sequence. In the next encounter, Heaney meets the apparition of a monk with whom he had 'spoken years ago'. Heaney made some confessions 'from behind the grille' about 'the need and chance' of his sin. As a compensation and penance for his sin, the monk requires him to 'Read poems as prayers' and to translate 'something by Juan de la Cruz', or St. John's of the cross, who was a sixteenth-century mystic from Spain. The poet compensates for his sins in purgatory by translating a version of *'Cantar del alma que se huelga de conoscer Dios por fe'*, or 'Song of the soul which delights to know God by faith.' The hymn glorifies the 'fountains' of the Christianity- the Trinitarian existence of The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit, the sacraments of the church, the sacrament of the Eucharist which is the insignia of believing in the harmony of the religion and a way 'to know God by faith'.

Section XII ushers in James Joyce's spirit. Heaney meets him on the mainland. He holds 'the hand / stretched down from the jetty' and sensed 'an alien comfort' in the company of the 'helping hand'. Joyce counsels him to do things 'on your [Heaney] own'.

> Lets go, let fly, forget.
> You've listened long enough. Now strike your note.
>
> (ll 29-30,Station Island XII, *SI*)

Heaney, now purged, can strike his own note. Heaney possibly now needs no 'helping hands'. Hence Joyce's phantom leaves him and 'moved off quickly'.

The presence of Sweeney can be felt intensely in the concluding section 'Sweeney Redivivus'. Heaney translated the Irish legend of Sweeney, the Ulster king, who is transformed into a bird as a curse for offending St. Ronan. Driven mad after being transformed into a bird, he flies, exiled from family and tribe, over Ireland. Heaney's association with Sweeney can be traced in their rhyming names and also in the exile image .Heaney's exile, unlike Sweeney was not a forced political exile. Heaney's exile was a compromising and compensating move against the pressures of the divided Irish society. It was a compromise to retain the sovereignty of his poetic voice. The exile removed him from the sectarian politics.

Heaney's exile was essential for his work and his intellectual poetic freedom. Edward Said writes in his article 'Intellectual Exile: Expatriates and Marginal':

> Exile is a model for the intellectual who is tempted, and even beset and overwhelmed, by the rewards of accommodation, yea-saying, setting in. Even if one is not actual immigrant or expatriate, it is still possible to think as one to imagine and investigate in spite of barriers, and always to move away from the centralizing authorities towards the margins, where you see things that are usually lost on minds that have never traveled beyond the conventional and the comfortable [17]

Sweeney in 'Sweeney Redivivus', is the alter ego of Seamus Heaney. In one of his interviews, he confessed that in the figure of Sweeney, he struck a chord which led to the discovery of new feelings. These feelings came like a dream of possibility across the swirl of private feelings. Heaney amalgamates the myth of Sweeney with his own schema.

The poem 'The First Gloss', recollect Heaney's poem 'Digging', from the anthology, *Death of a Naturalist*. Heaney 'Take[s] hold of the shaft of the pen' to subscribe 'to the first step taken'. The title poem 'Sweeney Redivivus' narrates people's indifferent attitude towards Sweeney:

> And there I was, incredible to myself,
> among people far too eager to believe me
> and my story, even if it happened to be true.
>
> (ll 13-15, Sweeney Redivivus , *SI*)

In the process of integrating a myth, Heaney never looses sight of nature which has always nourished and fostered his imagination. In fact, Sweeney lived in unison with nature. In this section he has written a number of poems which can be termed very aptly as tree-poems. The immigrant Sweeney wanders amidst the trees, in the poem 'In the Beech', he sees tanks and planes of World War II. The unambiguous reference is to the planes, tanks and the air force bases of Northern Ireland. The poem 'Holly' is about a natural world with domestic sensibility. 'In the Chestnut Tree', celebrates a resilient old

tree. In his collection of essays, Heaney includes ruminative essay entitled 'The God in the Tree' on Irish nature poetry.

'The First Flight' celebrates Heaney's outmaneuvering of harsh criticism. They pronounced him as 'a feeder off battlefields' and Heaney recompenses and 'mastered new rungs of air / to survey out of reach'. The flight, which connotes his move from Belfast to Glanmore, was to save him from the adversaries. In the poem 'The Scribes', Heaney shows a sense of awkwardness in the company of his critics, who in his absence 'perfect[ed] themselves against me [Heaney] page by page'. Heaney believes that his work will speak for itself but he is not prepared to turn ignore the adverse criticism. He compensates, in the guise of Sweeney, by challenging them with the poem:

> Let them remember this is not inconsiderable
> contribution to their jealous art.
>
> (ll 23-24, The Scribes, *SI*)

The ecclesiastical supremacy of Catholicism is reflected in the poem 'The Cleric' who 'overbore / with his unction and orders'. For a devout Catholic, the individual freedom is judged through the yardsticks of the church which sometime leave the people 'skulking and whingeing'. The voice of still-pagan Sweeney compensates for the skulking and whingeing:

> Give him his due, in the end
>
> he opened my path to a kingdom
> of such scope and neuter allegiance
> my emptiness reigns at its whim.
>
> (ll 24-27, The Cleric, *SI*)

Heaney envisages Catholicism as a language that has lost the power to speak in the poem 'In Illo Tempore', and it 'hardly tempts me [him]' to credit it. The last poem of the section is 'On the Road', which symbolize the road to salvation. A rich young man asks a question:

Master, what must I
do to be saved?

(ll 17-18, On the Road, *SI*)

The reply comes from Christ:

Sell all you have
And give to the poor.

(ll 26-27, On the Road, *SI*)

For attaining salvation, the young rich man has to sacrifice the luxuries of his life and compromise with his status and as compensation he will be saved. Heaney's poetic pilgrimage has given him insight, inspiration and confidence. The poet now stands with a clearly defined road ahead of him. The reply that comes from Christ provides the poet with direction.

The Haw Lantern (1987)

Heaney's preoccupation with the role of language in the construction of social and political identity is a significant issue which he considers in the anthology *The Haw Lantern*. Helen Vendler claims that '*The Haw Lantern* is a book of strict, even stiff, second thoughts' [19]. Heaney embellishes the book with parables, allegories and satires on the social, political and religious aspects of Irish life. He deploys these strategies to define the marginal status of Northern Ireland as within the colonial divisions created by the rules of the British Empire and the Protestant Church. To repair the fractured identity of Irish people, the poet uses his poetry as a medium to provide compromises and compensations.

The opening poem 'Alphabets' traces the metamorphosis of Heaney from a small boy 'when he goes to school' to a proficient professor who 'stands in a wooden O' and

'alludes to Shakespeare' and 'Graves' It traces the poetic journey of his life from the rural primary school to the top university where he studied and worked in later in his life. The poem was written as the Phi Beta Kappa Poem, (an academic honour society of American college and university students showing high academic achievement. It was founded in 1776) at Harvard in 1984.

The poem hints at the educational system of Northern Ireland, in which the child is exposed to the different scripts, diction and intonations of English, Latin and Irish. As the child grows, the languages broaden his comprehension of place and culture and expand his linguistic and literary abilities. Heaney penetrates into the psyche of a child and projects all the confusions and curiosities:

> There he draws smoke with the chalk the whole first week,
> Then draws the forked stick that they call a Y
> This is writing. A swan's neck and swan's back
> Make the 2 he can see now as well as say
>
> The two rafters and a cross-tie on the slate
> Are the letter some call *ah*, some call *ay*.
> There are charts, there are headlines, there is a right
> Way to hold the pen and a wrong way.
>
> (ll 5-12, Alphabets, *HL*)

Grasping '*Elementa Latina*' in the 'stricter school', the child 'learns... other writing' and masters the language when he grows up and functions as a poet and a teacher, delivering lectures on the legends of literary traditions and researching their primeval, mysterious origins:

> The globe has spun. He stands in a wooden O.
> He alludes to Shakespeare. He alludes to Graves.
>
> (ll 41-42, Alphabets, *HL*)

Neil Corcoran is of the view that the 'wooden O' refers to a large lecture hall, such as Globe Theater.[20] Corcoran, further, suggests that Heaney's thought-process has undergone transformation as a result of his altered position in life.[21]The letters become signifiers of reality. The reference to 'the necromancer / Who would hang from the doomed ceiling of his house' and 'The astronaut' who tries to figure out the globe 'from his small window' raises the poet's hopes for a unified global vision. Tobin writes that Heaney 'is driven to pursue a unified vision of the world. The hope of such global vision is embodied by the two exemplary figures that end the poem.'[22] Heaney has always stood for universal brotherhood and for a free and independent world which is not fragmented by the evil force of caste, creed, and colour. Through his vision, he compensates for hatred and lends a helping hand in breaking down the wall that divides the world. He, thus, struggles for bringing global harmony.

The poem can also be read as an elegy upon the diminishing rural life and on the extinction of the Irish language, thus denying to the Irish people, a concrete, linguistic and cultural identity. Another concern which is central to the poem shows is the role which supervision and education play in a child's life. Heaney earlier took up the theme of ruined childhood in poems such as 'Blackberry-Picking' in *Death of a Naturalist* and 'The Railway Children' in *Station Island.* He claims the lack of supervision and education damages the potential of the children which, otherwise, can be utilized in creative tasks.

Unlike those deprived and neglected children, the properly supervised and educated children can utilize their caliber in re-structuring and re-shaping the world. It was the concern for the importance of education that made Heaney join hand with Ted Hughes to bring out works such as *The Rattle Bag* and *The School Bag.* Thus, Heaney compensates for the failure of the society in shaping the lives of the deprived Irish children.

The colonial divisions of the Irish society placed Heaney where he is unable to make compromises with either. He 'grew up in between', as he writes in the poem

'Terminus'. He 'is still parleying' with the colonizers for some compromises and compensations. The colonizers left no stone unturned in the exploitation of the Irish people. Covering their devilish desires under the veil of development, they introduced the railway 'engine' and the 'factory chimney' in the place where large, green farms and fields had once been. Fanon, while explaining the ways in which colonialism operates, stated:

> When we consider the efforts made to carry out the cultural estrangement so characteristic of the colonial epoch, we realize that nothing has been left to chance and that the total result looked for by colonial domination was indeed to convince the natives that colonialism came to lighten their darkness. The effect consciously sought by colonialism was to drive into the natives' heads the idea that if the settlers were to leave, they would at once fall back into barbarism, degradation and bestiality. [23]

The natives became alien to their own culture. Industrialization stripped them not only of their rural inheritance but also of identity. Postcolonial theory analyses representations and identity formation of the colonized in the literary and cultural text. It also examines various stages, strategies and exploitations employed by the dominant. Identity is a product of culture and history and it can be divided into three phases: The pre-colonial identities, the colonial identities and the postcolonial identities. The pre-colonial identities are created independently. They are free from the impact of the colonizers. The divisions in pre-colonial identities are based not only on ancestry and visible traits such as colour of the skin and facial features. It is also based on linguistic, cultural and regional differences. The colonial identities are results of colonial divisions.

During the Enlightment, the 'races' were the base of the division. The non-white races were regarded as inferior and thus best fitted for the lives of toil under White supervision. The colonizations of Africa and Indian subcontinents were based on the dialectics of White / Black. One significant feature about the Irish colonization was that both the colonizer and the colonized were White. It was not based on the binary oppositions of colours. In this case the dominant were not colour conscious. The post colonial identities are formed through negotiations and by rejecting the dominance of colonial identity.

Industrialization was brought at the expense of rural life. The colonizers stripped the natives of their lands, belongings, and freedom. They spoke of 'prudent squirrel's hoard' and 'mammon of iniquity' when the natives were left with just few 'coins'. This reveals their double-standards. The 'mammon' and 'coins' are in binary opposition and there is a large difference between them there is in between the rich and the poor or between the colonizer and the colonized. This reflects the financial position of the 'Masters' who have reached this position by depriving the 'Slaves'.

The simile of squirrel's hoard very aptly echoes the rural attitude. The squirrel is an innocent rodent that saves its food for the rainy season. The rustic Irish people saved their hard-laboured earning to secure their future but the colonizer confiscated that too and gave just a fraction to them. The fraction of the profit 'shone like gifts at a Nativity'. Heaney attempts hard to negotiate with the colonizers.

> Baronies, parishes met where I was born.
> When I stood on the central stepping stone.
>
> (ll 19-20, Terminus, *HL*)

Heaney does not desire a compromise where he would stand 'on the central stepping stone'. He wants to move away from the peripheral existence. Ireland is his own place where he 'was born' and has every right to claim his land and to ask for compensations for himself as well as for his whole country. Hart claimed:

> Heaney's early allegories subvert Britain's patriarchal powers so that the silenced, matriarchal voices of his heritage can speak. In *The Haw Lantern*, Heaney again summons the British power brokers to the debating table, and although the talk is perhaps more metaphysical in tone and subject, the underlying political and linguistic issues are similar to earlier ones. [24]

Ireland belongs to Irish people, yet they lived there on the periphery, subject to the whims of the administration. They have almost no role in governing their country. The colonial irony was that even in their own land they are looked at with suspicion.

Heaney captures the dilemma when he is stopped and questioned in an army roadblock. He says that 'everything is pure interrogation' and at last after the interrogation, the poet is 'arraigned yet free'. The incident is significant. The 'roadblocks' suggest the hurdles of conscience and consciousness which a poet has to encounter in the journey of his writing 'where it happens again'.

> So you drive on to frontier of writing
> where it happens again. The guns on tripods;
> the sergeant with his on-off mike repeating
>
> data about you...

(ll 13-16, From the Frontier of writing, *HL*)

Heaney gives second thoughts to the poetic liberties in the act of writing. Whatever freedom sanctions, a poet has to subjugate to ethical definitions. He has to compromise with moral and ethical responsibilities. The poem also regards the act of writing as a shelter, where the poet can find refuge and compensate for the atrocities of political subjugation and crisis. The conceit of 'polished widescreen' reflects the sectarian divisions of the state. The delineation of ethical responsibility of a poet is the theme of the poem 'from the Republic of Conscience', where he makes an allegorical journey to the republic of conscience. He crosses the political, linguistic and geographical boundaries and finds that the republic is 'noiseless'. The vigilantes order him 'to declare / the words of our traditional cures and charms / to heal dumbness and avert the evil eye'. Every society has its own traditional beliefs and rituals which the people inherit. Heaney emphasizes the fact that magic, tradition and faith combine to produce significant archetypes.

The poem concludes with the return journey where he is asked to 'consider' himself 'a representative / to speak on their behalf in my own tongue'. Having been to the republic, Heaney fulfils the ethical and moral responsibility by speaking against the entire political crisis and against the 'Troubles'. His responsibilities demand more than just being a mute witness to their calamity. His conscience desires him to speak out against

the prevailing colonial divisions. It pleads with him to be a vociferous speaker and discourages him from confining his writings. It needs a healing touch and a soothing compensatory voice from the poet.

Heaney is exiled to the realm of speechlessness in the poem 'From the Land of Unspoken'. He is unclear in his mind about how and 'when or why our exile began / among speech-ridden, but solidarity comes flooding up in us / when we hear their legends'. He is restless and wants to verbalize to the marginal status of writers and their writings in affluent and capitalist speech-oriented society.

> I have heard of a bar of platinum
> kept by a logical and talkative nation
> as their standard of measurement,
> the throne room and the burial chamber
> of every calculation and prediction.
> I could feel at home inside that metal core
> slumbering at the very hub of systems
>
> (ll 1-7, From the Land of Unspoken, *HL*)

Heaney feels 'at home' and comfortable in the logocentric 'hub of system'. He longs for one standard system of measurement as the 'bar of platinum' kept by the International Bureau of Weights and Measurement near Paris. The enticement of the 'slumbering' reverie is shaken with the realization that in this multicultural, multi-lingual and diverse world, a single standard will be of no use and may even serve as an emblem of the dictatorial society in which Heaney himself holds no faith. Heaney considers the openly political poet responsible for the linguistic corruption of language. He admits:

> Our unspoken assumptions have the force of revelation. How else could we know that whoever is the first of us to seek assent and votes in a rich democracy will be the last of us and have killed our language? Meanwhile, if we miss the sight of a fish we heard jumping and then see its ripples, that means one more of us is dying somewhere.[25]

Heaney attempts to define the position of the modern poet caught in the destabilizing pressures of a political wasteland and a hounding media. He desires a proper

position for the poet whose status and voice has been drowned in the deafening noises all around. Heaney's demand is a compensatory yearning for the original dignified status of the poet.

As a resistance and reparation to the colonizers denials, the natives demonstrate that their culture exists. The colonial theory confronted the natives' mind with the theory of pre-colonial barbarity which results in the obsessive search for a national culture of the pre-colonial era. This is done, also, for the sake of shielding themselves from the colonizer's culture. Heaney reclaims his culture and cultural identity in the poem 'From the Canton of Expectation':

> Once in the year we gathered in a field
> of dance platforms and tents where children sang
> songs they had learned by rote in the old language.
>
> (ll 6-8, From the Canton of Expectation, *HL*)

Identities are deeply rooted in culture. They emerges out of the cultural history of the natives. In the postcolonial era, the role of culture in construction of identity has become significant. Colonialism is responsible for manipulating, fracturing, imposing and re-constructing the identities of the natives. The cultural art form of dance and the traditionally inherited 'songs...in old language' are the emotional cords which the natives of Ireland are attached to their culture. The shadow of colonialism blurred their ethnic identity. For the coloniszers, the national song of the natives becomes a 'rebel anthem'. This highlights the differences in the attitudes of the victim and the victimizer. Heaney tries to salvage the ethnicity of Irish traditions. It serves to recompense, redefine and rehabilitate the fading national culture. Fanon claims in his essay 'On National Culture':

> The claim in the national culture in the past does not only rehabilitate that nation and serve as a justification for the hope of future national culture. In the sphere of psycho-affective equilibrium it is responsible for an important change in the native...colonialism is not simply content to impose its rule upon the present and the future of dominated country. Colonialism is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying the native's brain of all form and content. By a kind of perverted

logic, it turns to the past of oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures and destroys it. [26]

The age old period of colonialism and the colonial discourse deprived the natives of their right to construct their own identities. There has always been a big difference in the point of view of the colonized and the colonizers. Thus, there are different versions of histories. One is written by the masters and other by the slaves. Post colonialism gives preference to the re-writing of history by the natives.

Heaney is a postmodern poet who believes in the power of education. Educational empowerment will furnish the 'Young heads' with resistance for combating their crisis. Heaney paints a touching picture of young Irish children busy in their studies, which he believes 'would banish the condition for ever':

> Books open in the newly wired kitchens.
> young heads that might have dozed a life away
> against the flanks of milking cows were busy
> paving and penciling their first causeways
> across the prescribed texts. The paving stones
> of quadrangles came next and a grammar
> of imperatives, the new age of demands.
>
> (ll 19-25, From the Canton of Expectation, *HL*)

Armed with the tools of education, which is the fundamental requirement of the 'new age', the future generation of Ireland will banish their ghastly circumstances. Heaney's hope can be looked upon as a compensation for the deprived Irish children. The image of the children studying in 'kitchens' implies that unlike earlier times, the Irish people will not compromise with the future of their children. If needed, they will educate them at home. They seem to have understood losses associated with the lack of literacy and proper supervision. This is one of the campaigns initiated by Heaney.

The first stanza of the poem talks about the attachment to traditional native culture and the second stanza discuss native resistance through educational

empowerment. The implication here is that while pursuing modernity one must not compromise and let go of cultural traditions. Heaney hopes for a compensation in the resurrection of a traditional society through education which will result in the unification of tradition and modernity. The attitude of Irish people preparing for future resistance can be traced to wood-kerne, rebels from Irish history, who on their defeat took shelter in woods to prepare for the future. Heaney refers to them in the poem 'Exposure' in *North*.

Heaney's hopes grow in the concluding stanza, where he refers to the reversal of the power of colonialism.

> *What looks the strongest has outlived its term.*
> *The future lies with what's affirmed from under.*
>
> (ll 32-33, From the Canton of Expectation, *HL*)

The reversal of power- from margin to center, from strong to weak is a postcolonial compensation for colonized Irish people. According to Ashcroft, Griffth and Tiffin in *The Empire Writes Back*:

> The alienating process which initially served to relegate the post-colonial world to the 'margin' turned upon itself and acted to push that world through a kind of mental barrier into a position from which a experience could be viewed as uncentred, pluralistic and multifarious.[27]

In the title poem 'The Haw lantern', Heaney takes up the role of 'Diogenes* with his lantern' searching for 'one just man'. The quest for justice and truth is undertaken by Heaney and his countrymen. The colonial governance has distorted reality and blurred social, historical and political vision. Heaney transforms the haw into an ethical lantern and sets off on an expedition to hunt for historical, political and social reality that will change the colonial fabrications. His lantern is 'a small light for small people' and the

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Diogenes of Sinope on the Euxine (4th c. B.C), the principal representative of the Cynic school of philosophy. He lived at Athens and Corinth, and his extravagantly simple mode of life and repudiation of civilized customs made him the subject of many anecdotes. [28]

little wish it makes is to protect its 'wick of self-respect from dying out'. Heaney wishes his people to perceive the truth. He does not want them to compromise with their self-respect. Heaney's quest is a compensatory quest.

The dreadful childhood experience of the classroom, in 'Hailstones' is representative of colonial cruelty. 'My cheek was hit and hit', Heaney narrates. He is hit again with a 'ruler across the knuckle'. The strikes descend like hailstones of colonial suppression, historical misrepresentations, cultural repressions and linguistic domination. The infliction of punishment is one of the tactics of the colonizers to cow down the natives and to impress upon them their marginal position and to transmit the values of colonial subjugation:

> and left me there with my chances.
> I made a small hard ball
> of burning water running from my hand
>
> (ll 7-9, Hailstones, *HL*)

The implication in these lines is that Heaney, as a compensatory counter attack, will redeem, re-write and re-use something that has been used to oppress him and his people. He will invert the strategies of the victimizer. This refers to Heaney's use of language and writings for re-writing and deconstructing the hegemony of the Empire. He speaks in Caliban's voice. His poem serve as a postcolonial compensation for literary compensation for literary misrepresentations and as a protest against linguistic hegemony.

Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin express a similar idea:

> Language becomes the medium through which a hierarchical structure of power is perpetuated, and the medium through which concepts of 'truth', 'order', 'reality' become established. Such power is rejected in the emergence of an effective post-colonial voice. [29]

Heaney's concern for a peaceful and harmonious society attracts attention in the poem 'Parable Ireland', where he destabilizes the nostalgia for a homogeneous culture by

recognizing the differences in diversity. He mocks the divisions which 'subversives and collaborators' have created with their version of Ireland. Heaney is aware of the existing divisions in his country.

The religious differences between Celts and Christians, or the ideological differences between Protestants and Catholics, remind him of diversity but for the sectarians, they are indispensable. They are always indulged 'with a fierce possessiveness / for the right to set 'the island story' straight'. Heaney appeals to his people to set aside the differences and make them understand the need to compromise with unnecessary issues to facilitate a peaceful reconciliation.

The poem concludes with the story of a man who 'died / convinced / that the cutting of Panama Canal / would mean the ocean would all drain away / and the island disappear by aggrandizement.' The useless blood- shed will not serve their purpose. They may belong to different ethnic groups but to the same species of human beings. Various colonizations, globalization and mass migrations and of people has resulted in construction of different ethnic groups. Ethnicity emphasizes upon the relation of an individual to a perceived past and culture. According to Northern Ireland Census 2001, the population of Ireland constitutes various ethnic groups including Whites, emigrants from Indians, Pakistanis, Africans, Chinese, and Black Caribbeans. Much of the civil violence in Northern Ireland is because of the differences and divisions in the country. Heaney, as a philanthropist, advocates mutual love and understanding. He suggests that certain compromises are essential for love and harmony.

Heaney has always remained emotionally involved with the familiar and filial. Family bonds are vital in his life. In the elegies of this anthology he combines the concreteness of living in the shadows of familial loss. As filial compensations he recollects and commemorates his relatives in the elegies. His young niece Rachel's death in an accident and her soul's departure to heaven is remembered in 'The Wishing Tree', his father's death is memorialized in 'The Stone Verdict' and in a sequence of sonnets; in 'Clearances' he tenderly remembers his departed mother.

'The Stone Verdict' gives mythical dimensions to his father's death. It recollects Heaney's introvert father, who 'relied on through a lifetime's speechlessness', on 'judgement place'.

> Let it be like the judgement of Hermes,
> God of the stone of heap, where the stones were verdicts
> Cast solidly at his feet, piling around him
> Until he stood waist-deep in the cairn
> Of his absolution...
>
> (ll 8-12, The Stone Verdict, *HL*)

His father's prayer is that he be given the 'judgement of Hermes'. Hermes, a figure from Greek mythology was a son of Zeus and Maia. He was summoned for killing the dogs of Agros. He faced a silent verdict in which gods silently cast their voting-pebbles at his feet and left him encased in a heap of stones. Heaney, in his poetry, often returns the missing voices to the owners. His father's speechlessness suggests the silence of a colonized native. This is the silence of either compromising with the powerful Masters or of resistance against the Masters. Heaney hopes for a heavenly compensation of 'absolution' for him. Heaney coins a religious philosophy of compensation for the noble, rendered in heaven to atone for the difficulties of this life. Such compensation for Heaney's father will serve as an emotional compensation for the poet tortured by the trauma of separation.

In the elegiac sequence of eight sonnets 'Clearances', Heaney articulates his intimate relationship with his mother, who died in 1984, in uncomplicated and childlike terms. He warmheartedly recollects the domestic chores of folding bed sheets, peeling potatoes and attending mass with his mother.

> The cool that came off sheets just off the line
> Made me think the damp must still be in them
> But I took my corners of linen
> And pulled against her, first straight down the hem
> And diagonally, then flapped and shook
>
> (ll 1-5, Clearances V, *HL*)

Heaney universalizes the emotional bond between son and mother with such affectionate delineations. The simple domestic task of peeling potatoes together becomes the emblem of strong bonds.

> When all others were away at Mass
> I was hers as we peeled potatoes.
>
> (ll 1-2, Clearances III, *HL*)

Heaney attributes his life's success to his mother. He claims that she was always a motivating factor. He acknowledges the contribution of his mother in the lines with which he has prefaced the sequence. He admits that his mother 'taught' him 'what her uncle once taught her'. She taught him everything- from mechanical skills to 'face[ing] the music'. Heaney years to be taught by her once again:

> *... Teach me now to listen,*
> *To strike it rich behind the linear black*
>
> (ll 8-9, Clearances, *HL*)

Heaney, with touching vividness, recalls ordinary household items that bond him with his mother. The recollection of goods like 'polished linoleum...Brass taps...The china cups...sugar bowl and jug' and the whistle of 'kettle...Sandwich and tea scone' becomes the motifs of a childhood full of love. The moments of love are contrasted with the awareness of the turmoil going on outside the house. The carnage of the outside world is compensated by the 'cool comfort' of the house. Heaney's relationship with his mother which he describes as his 'Sons and Lovers phase' touches an Oedipal vein.

The loss of his mother inflicts a permanent wound in the poet's heart. No panacea can dull the pangs of longings. The emotional emptiness is depicted in the following lines:

> The space we stood around had been emptied

Into us to keep, it penetrated
Clearance that suddenly stood open

(ll 11-13, Clearances VII, *HL*

So while the parish at her bedside
Went hammer and tongs at the prayers for the dying
And some were responding and some crying
I remembered her head bent towards my head,
Her breath in mine, our fluent dipping knives-
Never closer the whole rest of our lives.

(ll 9-14, Clearances III, *HL*)

The void drives the poet to the act of writing. Recollections serve as psychological and emotional compromises. Heaney recollects moments spent with his mother and turns them into poignant poetry to compromise with the lacerating pain of loss.

The poem 'Wolfe Tone' is the portrait of a Protestant Irish revolutionary, Tone (1763-1798), who strove hard for the harmonious existence of Catholics and Protestants. His vision of union was aimed at diluting the sectarian dividing policies of the colonizers. He had to pay for his revolutionary vision. The colonizer compensated by capturing him and sentenced him for disloyalty. In fact Tone was loyal, if not to his ideological sect, but to his vision and his conscience with which he never made compromises. Ultimately, he committed suicide in the prison.

I was the shouldered oar that ended up
far from the brine and whiff of venture,

like a scratching-post or a crossroads flagpole,
out of my element among small farmers-

(ll 7-10, Wolfe Tone, *HL*)

The political parable of Tone is an epitome of dedication to a visionary. Vision is the foundation of some of the concrete realities of the world. M.K Gandhi had a vision of

free India, Parnell had a vision of free Ireland and beside them there are thousand of unsung heroes, who remained anonymous, but who were endowed with visions to make the society a better place. Heaney too, joins the bandwagon, with his vision of a better Ireland. In the poem 'The Mud Vision', Heaney paints a picture of an anonymous country. The territory displays deserted rural barrenness and 'casualties on their stretchers'. The people maintain a safe distance and watch the commotion:

> Watching ourselves at a distance, advantaged
> And airy as a man on a springboard
> Who keeps limbering up because the man cannot dive.
>
> (ll 11-13,The Mud Vision, *HL*)

The compromised outlook and the vision of the people yield an impotent nation which needs to be renewed with a compensatory vision. The poem concludes with the recognition of 'folly':

> Just like that, we forgot that the vision was ours,
> Our one chance to know the incomparable
> And dive to future...
>
> (ll 52-54,The Mud Vision, *HL*)

The poem expresses anger against the compromised survival and 'convinced and estranged' existence. The survival seems to be the least accomplishment of the Irish people offering no compensation for the vanished vision. The vanished vision is also lamented in the poem 'The Disappearing Island'. The poem has a discussion about the remote past as suggest by the use of 'Once'.The implication is that Ireland has been subjected to oppression for a very long time, so much so that even the poet is unable to identify the exact time:

> Once we had gathered driftwood, made a hearth
> And hung a cauldron in its firmament
>
> (ll 4-5,The Disappearing Island, *HL*)

Colonization had shattered the culture and the cultural identity of the people. Their original culture taught them to be united. The humane image of the people working harmoniously- gathering, making the hearth, and hanging cauldrons, probably for a cultural feast reflects Heaney's deep concern for the re-unification against the ubiquitous colonial divisions. The long-lost harmony was a result of a vision which has become somewhat smudged:

> All I believe that happened there was a vision
>
> (ll 9,The Disappearing Island, *HL*)

For a better tomorrow, the old distorted ethics have to be discarded and redundant values have to be forsaken. In the poem 'The Riddle', Heaney addresses the issue of ethics through the story of a man 'who carried water in a riddle'. The central image is of a sieve, that separates the wheat from chaff, which others have 'never ... used':

> You never saw it used but still can hear
> The sift and fall of stuff hopped on the mesh
>
> (ll 1-2,The Riddle, *HL*)

Heaney uses an old world instrument and related processes to communicate a poetic ideology. With the advent of industrialization, the traditional rural skills faded away. Machines substituted the labourers and grain polishers replaced traditional sieves. Heaney uses such images to lament for the extinction of the cultural identity of the rural Irish people.

Heaney tells the story of the man, who discovered, that he was bullied, with false information about the wheat. Confused he kept the chaff and threw away the wheat. The story sounds like the saga of colonialism. The natives were bullied and culturally confused. The manners and morals of natives were condemned as miserable, pathetic and full of errors by colonizer. They were forcefully burdened with an alien culture. The natives were just left with the 'chaff' where as colonizers relished the 'wheat'. This

defines the colonial economic exploitation where the profit was taken by the victimizers and the victims were left with a very small portion of the profit. In the concluding lines, Heaney questions:

> Was it culpable ignorance, or was it rather
> A *via negative* through drops and let-downs?
>
> (ll 11-12,The Riddle, *HL*)

Heaney investigates into the cultural, political, economical issues of colonial exploitation. Until and unless the truth is brought to the forefront, the poet will not be able to provide the compensations.

Conclusion

In the four anthologies analyzed in this chapter, Heaney deals with a wide spectrum of themes. His poems are marked with the awareness of relationships between the personal, the political and the historical. He evokes his Irish identity with different strategies and writes back against the dominant discourse. The allusion to myths and history and local Irish places are some of the over powering concerns of his poetry. He registers intimacy with Irish people and places. The familiar and filial occupy special places in his poetry. The historical events like 'The Great Irish Famine of 1845', 'Bloody Sunday of 1972', 'Battle of Boyne' and 'Belfast Blitz' are referred to thorough elegies, allegories, parables and mythology.

Heaney regards Dante as exemplary and structures the anthologies such as *Field Work* and *Station Island* on Dante's *Inferno*. Heaney finds the concept of hell fitting to the Irish context. In the poem 'The Strand at Lough Beg', He casts himself and his dead cousin in the figures of Dante and Virgil. The intertextuality with Dante, allusions to Wordsworth and other poets are persistent techniques used by Heaney. The anthologies such as *Field Work* and *Station Island* are crowded with the ghosts of people known to Heaney personally or through their works. In the essay 'Envies and Identifications: Dante and the Modern poet', Heaney stated:

> When poets turn to the great masters of the past, they turn to an image of their own creation, one which is likely to be a reflection of their own needs, their own artistic inclinations and procedures. [31]

One can identify the influences of 'the great masters of the past' such as Dante, Wordsworth, Eliot and Larkin in Heaney's work. The Glanmore sonnets are Heaney's acknowledgement of the English Lyrical tradition and the influence of Wordsworth. Heaney presents his critical work in the form of autobiography, saying that the poets he discusses have become part of his memory.[32] In particular; he sees his relationship with the poets he writes about as a form of immersion, where their work, over a period of time, comes to bear on his poetics.[33] He adopts and adapts their works to suit his contexts.

Heaney belongs to the minority Catholic community of Ireland. His portrayal of his Catholic consciousness in his poetry has provoked mixed responses. Haffenden claims 'Heaney is not what you'd call a pious Catholic' [34] whereas James Booth remarks Heaney's 'emblems are Jungian as much as Christian, his poetry still aims at the natural spirituality of the past age when it was believed that God had hidden hieroglyphics and riddles in his creation for his creature to seek out'[35] It can be pointed out that Ireland, from the beginning, was not a Christian country. Celts, about 350 B.C, introduced a new culture to Ireland. It was Christianized by St. Patrick in fifth century A.D. However, many Celtic converts retained aspects of their Druidic religious practices, and Ireland became the center of a distinctive form of Celtic Christianity. Heaney's version of Christianity can be traced back to its Celtic origin. Thus, he cannot be judged with the parameter of piousness. He paints the picture of totemestic, hieratic, legendary landscapes with archetypal, magical and folkloric beliefs. This sense of place, Heaney suggested, is 'foundation for a marvelous or magical view of the world, a foundation that sustained diminished structure of love and superstition and half pagan, half Christian thought and practice'[36]His poetry is marked by awareness of loss and rapidly changing, disorienting and deeply unwelcoming colonial modernity. Thus, his poetry is retrospective. Heaney returns to his roots as a stratagem against the hegemony.

The educational empowerment of Irish people attracts Heaney's attention. He believes that the power of education will change the condition of Ireland. He emphasizes on proper supervision for the children. The theme of ruined childhood and its compensation through education and supervision is dealt with thoroughly in his works. The related theme of paternal rejection is also dealt with in the poem such as 'Ugolino'.

In the anthology, *The Haw Lantern*, Heaney identifies himself with Diogenes. He explores 'contradictory dimension of reality'[37]. In the poem 'Alphabets', He traces his poetic journey and in 'From the Frontier of Writing', he gives second thought to the poetic liberties in the act of writing. He talks of poetry not as a simple act of writing but he believes in the poetry of responsibility. The distance from politics can be seen as an act of self-restrain in Heaney's poetics of exile. His poetic exile is a compensation from the harsh atrocities of his country.

Heaney's poetry is the 'poetry of visions'. He believes that vision is the foundation of some of the concrete realities of the world. He has visions of a better Ireland and a healthy world. He believes in humanism as a necessary component. He returns to his roots to revive society. Heaney subsumes the immortality of the soul and hopes for celestial compensations. His poetry crosses the boundary of death. He never contemplates his own death. His own death never seems to trouble him in the elegies he writes. The loss of the family bonds is compensated for by resurrecting and creating imaginary rendezvous with dead family members in the poems 'The Stone Verdict', 'The Wishing Tree' and in the poems of 'Clearances' sequence.

Heaney dismantles hegemonic strategies. He celebrates his Irish culture and traditions in 'From the Canton of Expectation'. He uses language and writings as a compensatory counter for deconstructing colonialism. In 'Terminus', he negotiates with the hegemony. He redeems, re-writes and inverts colonial tactics. The demeaning strategies are extended even to the dead. The dialectics of the colonial divisions are evoked to state the marginalized position of Irish people as the other. The compromises

made,and the compensations demanded, are psychological, geographical, sociological, spiritual and heavenly in nature. The implication is that Heaney desires a perfect world.

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32. "An Interview with Seamus Heaney", conducted by Rand Brandes (*Salmagundi* 80): 1988, p 14.

33. ibid. Heaney says: "The only way I can write with any conviction is out of love. Not necessarily from my long immersion in the poet, but the poet's long immersion in me." His "criticism," says the poet, is a "communing with a previously excited self," a "resuscitation of what has been already settled" in relation to that poet.

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Across the clear blue sky. It shook the earth
And the clogged underneath, the River Styx,
The winding streams, the Atlantic shore itself.
Anything can happen, the tallest tower
Be overturned...

Anything Can Happen, ***District and Circle.***

Chapter IV

Neighbour is mankind: Vision, Values, Versatility

Introduction

Seamus Heaney's poetry is for the promotion of causes he believes in. The present world of uncertainties evokes mixed responses in the poet's psyche. On the one hand he feels that scientific progress and globalization have turned the world into a neighbourhood and on the other hand he feels unhappy about the circumstances that have remained unchanged since prehistoric times. Barbarity has just one evil face. Tragic archetypes occur in every age. Atrocities committed in the Iron Age can find parallels in contemporary wars. Memories of World War II, the pogrom of the Jews, the ethnic cleansing in Balkan, the 9/11 terror attacks on WTC, the London bombing of 2005, all seem extensions of the violence of ancient wars such as the war of Troy.

The poet is poignantly aware of his responsibility. Earlier Heaney focused on the violence and plight of Ireland but in later poetry he has gone global with a vision of peace, love and harmony. It seems that the conferment of the Nobel Prize in 1995 made him conscious of greater responsibilities and widened the horizon of his poetry. He steps out of his national consciousness and treats the entire world as his arena.

In this chapter the anthologies published between 1991 and 2006 will be analyzed viz. *Seeing Things* (1991), *The Spirit Level* (1996), *Electric Light* (2001) and *District and Circle* (2006). These anthologies bring into focus Heaney's new perspectives. In a world torn apart by violence and wars, Heaney preaches the lessons of harmony, love and universal brotherhood. The chapter will also explore the new sensitivities of Heaney's poetry which establish Heaney as a poet of the world.

Seeing Things (1991)

From an external physicality of things, Heaney's vision shifts towards the inner spiritual world of 'thingness' in the anthology, *Seeing Things*, published in 1991. Heaney begins the anthology under the influence of two seminal works. The anthology opens with 'The Golden Bough', a translation of the celebrated passage of Virgil's *Aeneid*, and

concludes the book by 'Squarings' sequences shadowed with Dante's *Inferno*. Virgil's version of hell in *Aeneid* serves as a thematic as well as structural plot for Dante's *Divine Comedy*, and for this reason Virgil becomes Dante's guide, in his description of hell. Heaney is also preoccupied with works of other poets such as Derek Mahon, Philip Larkin, Henry Vaughan, Thomas Hardy, Pasternak, Yeats, Sage Han Shan, archaeologist Tom Delaney.

The anthology is about visions, about seeing things, even ordinary, mundane things, through the clarity of renewed poetic vision. Henry Hart remark:

> The situation he obsessively delineates is one where mind comes up against a confining boundary, is checked by it, but then is simulated to transcend it. In the end all of his forms of resistance and containment are resisted. To his dialectical mind, limits provoke sublimation and sublimity! [1]

The opening poem, a loose translation of Aeneid (IV, 98-148)*, acts as a prologue, to the anthology. In Virgil's translation, 'the prophetess' or Sibyl tells Aeneas**, how he, without dying, can meet the ghost of his father, in hell. Aeneas is 'Blood relation of gods, / Trojan, son of Anchises'. The road to the underworld passes through the 'Forest spread half-way down / And Cocytus winds through the dark, licking its banks' but the desire for a union with father is so intense that Aeneas takes the 'real task' of the journey to the 'underworld dark'.

Book IV * Aeneas visits Cumaean Sibyl, who foretells his wars in Latium. After plucking by her direction the Golden Bough he descends with her, through the cave of Avernus, to the nether world. They reach the Styx and on the hither side see the ghosts of the unburied dead; among them Palinurus, who recounts his fate and begs for burial. The Golden Bough gains, for Aeneas permission from Charon to cross the Styx. Cerberus is pacified with the drugged honey cake. Various groups of dead are seen: infants, those unjustly condemned, those who have died from love (among whom Dido receives in silence the renewed excuses of Aeneas), and those who have fallen in wars. They approach the entrance to Tartarus, where the worst criminal suffers torments: but turn aside to Elysium, where the blest enjoy a care-free life. Here Aeneas finds and vainly seeks to embrace Anchises. He sees the ghosts drinking at the river Lethe and Anchises expounds to him the reincarnation of souls after along purgation. Among these souls he points out to his son those men who are in future to be illustrious in Roman history, from Romulus and early kings to the great generals of later days, Augustus himself, and his nephew Marcellus, to whose brief life the poet makes touching allusion. Aeneas and the Sibyl then leave the world through the Ivory Gate, through which false dreams are sent to mortals. [2]

** Son of Anchises and Aphrodite and a member of the younger branch of royal family of Troy.[3]

Still, if love torments you so much and you so much desire
To sail the Stygian lake twice and twice to inspect
The underworld dark...

(ll 11-13, The Golden Bough, *ST*)

He symbolizes the continuous lineage of hard labour on the farms and fields. The loss of the father is not simply a filial longing but in a wider sense, it is the loss of the signifier for the signified rural identity. Heaney, in his early poetry, associated his father with the tradition of the 'spade'. In the mortal life of this planet, the union seems unattainable. However in the realm of the imagination, in the world of poesy, the unification can be achieved. The implication here is that, Heaney is willing to compensate for the loss through the power of poetry. In Virgil's *Aeneid*, the Sibyl tells Aeneas to pluck the 'golden-fledged tree-branch out of tree'. The action will render his journey problem free.

Hidden in the thick of a tree is a bough made of gold
And its leaves and pliable twigs are made of it too.

(ll 16-17, The Golden Bough, *ST*)

...And when it is plucked
A second one grows in its place, golden once more,
And the foliage growing upon it glimmers the same.

(ll 24-26, The Golden Bough, *ST*)

The plucking of 'the Golden Bough' can be regarded as the act of writing poetry. This suggests that Heaney will pluck the golden words from the vocabulary-tree and then perform the 'real task and the real understanding' of poetry to prepare the ground for meeting his father. The poem can also be regarded as Heaney's tribute to the powers of poetry. A similar theme is maintained in the poem 'Seeing Thing' through an anecdote of Heaney's childhood. The themes of return to childhood memories are recurrent in Heaney's work. The recollection is not for the sake of nostalgic compensations but Heaney reinterprets and reanalyzes them through his adult vision. The recollections of childhood memories are reminiscent of Wordsworth's poetry. It is a journey of retrievals.

In the introduction to his collection of essays, *The Essential Wordsworth*, Heaney remarked about Wordsworth's effort 'to retrieve for the chastened adult consciousness the spontaneous, trustful energies unconsciously available in the world of childhood'.[4] In the title poem 'Seeing Things', he remembers the childhood fear that he experienced on a voyage to 'Inishbofin on a Sunday morning'. He recollects how he 'panicked at the shiftiness and heft / Of the craft itself'.

> That quick response and buoyancy and swim-
> Kept me in agony. All the time
> As we went sailing evenly across
>
> (ll 15-17, Seeing Things, *ST*)

In Section II, he alludes to Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, where Stephen Deadlus puts in plain words:

> *claritas* is the artistic discovery and representation of the divine purpose in anything or a force of generalization which would make the esthetic image a universal one, make it outshine its proper conditions. [5]

Heaney adopts the theological word '*Claritas*', to universalize his experiences. In section III, the figure of the father, who had a narrow escape from death, is evoked.

> ...That afternoon
> I saw him face to face, he came to me
> With his damp footprints out of river,
>
> (ll 59-61, Seeing Things, *ST*)

The poem focuses on the figure of the dead father, who revitalizes in Heaney's poetry. Heaney, like Aeneas of Virgil's *Aeneid*, longs for a rendezvous with his father. In the poem 'Man and Boy' the father is described as a 'low-set man / Who feared debt all his life'. This suggests the pathetic financial life of Irish peasants under colonialism.

Heaney's visionary aspect in *Seeing Things* reveals an anticipation of a solution to the questions raised in earlier anthologies. The sequence of memory-retrieval-vision-return suggests that the poet flees from the agony of the real world to childhood memories and retrieves more than he actually remembers. In this excavation he is assisted by his highly developed poetic faculties. The transfigured memories identify significant adult consciousness in childhood memories and certain childish aspects in adult behaviour e.g. the desperate yearning to bring back his father. *Seeing Things* deals with the spiritual reinterpretation of memories otherwise lost under the weight of ambition, rivalry and greed. Childhood memories signify innocence, trust and positive energies that, on discovery, renew the world.

In the Nobel Prize acceptance speech, *Crediting Poetry*, Heaney has aptly described his poetic career as a 'journey into the wideness of language, a journey where each point of arrival – whether in one's poetry or one's life – turned out to be a stepping stone rather than a destination'.[6] In his poetry some poets occupy unique spaces. One such poet is Philip Larkin, whose spirit, is encountered in the poem 'The Journey Back'. This poem marks Larkin's death. In his collections of essays, Heaney remarked about Larkin:

> Larkin also had it in him to write his own version of the Paradiso. It might well have amounted to no more than an acknowledgement of need to imagine "such attics cleared of me, such absence"; nevertheless, in the poems he has written there is enough reach and longing to show that he did not completely settle for the well known bargain offer, a poetry of lowered sights and patently diminished expectations. [7]

In the poem Larkin is described as 'A nine-to five man who had seen poetry'. Larkin returns from the underworld and quotes Dante.

> It felt more like the forewarned journey back
> Into the heartland of ordinary.
> Still my old self. Ready to knock one back.
>
> A nine-to-five man who had seen poetry.
>
> (ll 1-4, The Journey Back, *ST*)

Heaney and Larkin, have different poetical attitudes. Larkin is a 'nine-to five man' who belongs to the English literary tradition whereas Heaney's roots are in the Irish tradition of 'spade'. The phrase nine-to-five refers to the timings of official jobs, to which dawn to dusk tradition of farmers, is quite alien. Larkin hails from the land of the colonizers but Heaney is from a colonized land.

A focused vision and a firm will can make a human being cross every hurdle of life. Through the figure of a handicapped 'woman who sat for years / In a wheelchair' in the poem 'Field of Vision', Heaney's seems to admire the firm determinations of the physically challenged people in the society. The 'Field of Vision' is an un-ploughed, less explored field of psychology of thousands of physically and mentally challenged people in society. The indifferent attitude of society colonizes the 'others' of the society. Heaney's handicapped 'woman' stands out, from the faceless, numberless crowd, with her own individuality. She is not ready to compromise with the challenges which destiny and society have burdened her with.

> She was steadfast as the big window itself.
> Her brow was clear as the chrome bits of chair.
> She never lamented once and she never
> Carried a spare ounce of emotional weight
>
> Face to face with her was an education
> Of sort you got across a well-braced gate-
> One of those lean, clean, iron, roadside ones
> Between two whitewashed pillars, where you could see
>
> (ll 9-16, Field of Vision, *ST*)

Heaney's poem pleads for a revised and renewed vision of society for the handicapped. There is a lot which a society can learn from them. They are not merely 'others' to be disposed off. Their strong will can educate society. They can serve as a 'well-braced gate', through which the society can renew its vision.

The scars of the divided cultural heritage have penetrated deep into the psyche of the Irish people. The poem 'The Settle Bed' describes a commonplace object namely a bed

which is 'cart-heavy, painted an ignorant brown / And pew-strait, bin-deep, standing four square as an ark' and than relates it to the conflict in Northern Ireland.

> Protestant, catholic, the Bible, the beads,
> Long talks at gables by moonlight, boots on the hearth
>
> (ll 10-11, The Settle Bed, *ST*)

The bed is 'an inheritance'. The poet imagines that a 'dower of settle beds tumbled from heaven' to bridge political and social divides in Ulster.

> Imagine a dower of settle beds tumbled from heaven
> Like some nonsensical vengeance come on the people,
>
> (ll 20-21, The Settle Bed, *ST*)

The imaginative world of 'dower of settle-beds' suggests the settlement between the divided Irish people. The implication is that in the imaginary world, everybody will feel content with his own bed and not fight for other beds. In the contemporary political realities of Ireland such a reconciliation seems almost impossible. So Heaney compromises with the imaginative world where 'whatever is given / Can always be reimagined'. Imagination becomes a compensation for the 'nonsensical vengeance' of Ireland.

Heaney once again make a visit to Glanmore in the sequence 'Glanmore Revisited' in the poem 'Scrabble' written '*in the memoriam Tom Delaney, archaeologist*'. The familiar world of 'Bare flags' and 'Pump water' and their game of Scrabble are evoked in the poem. The friendship with Delaney is old. This is suggested through the reference to game of scrabble which they played year after year. In the poem 'The Cot', he is present 'Years later in the same locus amoenus'. An ordinary and commonplace item like a cot is nostalgically associated with the past.

> And is the same cot I myself slept in
> When the whole world was a farm that eked and crowed.
>
> (ll 13-14, The Cot, *ST*)

The 'Glanmore Revisited' sequence is a return to Glanmore, a place where he sought refuge from the turbulence of the world. It is a return to the world of memory. The implication here is that the poet is always able to recourse to the world of memory to renew his poetic vision. This can be called a compensatory revision. Thorough out the anthology, Heaney makes such returns. In the poem 'Wheels within Wheels', he returns to his childhood days. Childhood experiences, for an adult, make no sense but for a child these activities represent excitement and adventure. Heaney describes how he derived pleasure by pedaling an upside down cycle manually. Heaney identifies that children are not afraid to experience.

> The first real grip I ever got on things
> Was when I learned the art of pedalling
> (By hand) a bike turned upside down, and drove
> Its back wheel preternaturally fast.
> I loved the disappearance of the spokes.
>
> (ll 1-5, Wheels within Wheels, *ST*)

In the concluding section, the childish activity of rotating the wheels is linked to the trained circus gymnastic skills of 'Sheer pirouette' and 'Tumblers'. The juxtaposition of 'Jongleurs', a wandering minister of medieval times who traveled around singing the compositions of troubadours or reciting epic poem in noble households or royal court, and the young children's game 'Ring-a-rosies', in which players sing while moving around in a circle, in the concluding line and the final word is '*Stet*!', which is an act of restoration. This suggests that Heaney wishes to restore his bygone childhood days through the adult memory. He never wishes to confine himself by singing of courtly love as the Jongleurs sang; along side he wishes to sing of the innocent world of childhood.

Childhood represents a time of life which is high in faith. Children believe easily in goodness of the world. As one grows older and encounters other aspects of human nature and experience, the faith in the goodness of the world gets frayed. The bruised, adult poet returns to childhood through his poetry. This regressive journey has a healing touch.

In the literary world, where the poet is confined by the compromised representative political speaker position of his community and country, Heaney wishes to sing about childhood days. This is a psychological compensation. The poem 'Fostering' seems to emphasize that Heaney is a foster-child of his native place. The poem is dedicated to John Montague and the line '*That heavy greenness fostered by water*' from his poem 'The Water Carrier' acts a prologue to Heaney's poem. In the poem, middle aged Heaney returns to his native place. In a roundabout way, the poem refers the impact of colonizers on the native culture.

> Of *glar* and *glit* and floods at *dailigone*
> My silting hope. My lowlands of mind
>
> (ll 7-8, Fostering, *ST*)

The words such as '*glar*', '*glit*' and '*dailigone*' are not from Irish vocabulary. These are Scottish words brought to Ireland by the settlers in early seventeenth century. The poet as a native is unfamiliar with these words. The poem is also a comment on the pressures on poetry.

> Heaviness of being. And poetry
> Sluggish in the doldrums of what happens.
> Me waiting until I was nearly fifty
> To credit marvels.
>
> (ll 9-12, Fostering, *ST*)

The political pressures on poetry have almost made it a stagnant reflection of the contemporary situations. However Heaney seems to reject this compromised notion and paves his own path. A sense of dissatisfaction is reflected in the confessions. As compensation, a new dispensation is called for:

> ...So long for air to brighten,
> Time to be dazzled and heart to be lighten.
>
> (ll 13-14, Fostering, *ST*)

'lighten' echoes with the sub-title of section II. The 'Squarings' sequence opens with a sub-section called 'Lightenings', the other sub-sections are 'Settings', 'Crossings' and 'Squarings' itself. In the whole sequence of 'Squarings', all the poems consist of twelve lines each and are divided into four stanzas of three lines each. The poems are thematically diverse but they are structurally united. In the 'Lightenings' sequence, poem xii, Heaney explains the meaning of the term

> And lightening? One meaning of that
> Beyond the usual sense of alleviation,
> Illumination, and so on, is this:
>
> A phenomenal instant when the spirit flares
> With pure exhilaration before death-
> The good thief in us harking to the promise!

(ll 1-6, Squarings xii, *ST*)

The imaginary perception of the moment of death and a vision of the world beyond human boundaries is delineated. Like the thief in the gospel account of Crucifixion, there is 'good thief' in human psychology who longs for of eternal life. In the concluding line, the compensation for the difficulties of earthly life is provided in the heavenly of reward.

> *This day thou shall be with me in Paradise.*

(ll 12, Squarings xii, *ST*)

Heaney searches for the 'old truth' in the environment of 'Unroofed scope'. The poem questions the Christian concept of after life:

> And after the commanded journey, what?
> Nothing magnificent, nothing unknown.

(ll 7-8, Lightenings i, *ST*)

In one of his interviews, Heaney remarked:

> . . . well, wait! Eternal life can mean utter reverence for life itself. And that's what there is. And our care in a green age, so to speak, in an age that's conscious of the ravages that have been done to the planet, the sacred value is actually eternal life. So that language is perfectly proper. It can be used again. It can be revived. It's not necessarily a mystifying language. It's a purifying language. [8]

Heaney exhibits an uncompromising attitude towards the 'old truth'. He investigates it under the scope of 'Knowledge-freshening wind' of rationality and prudence. In poem v he addresses after life as 'flimsy'. The theme is continued in poem xxii, where Heaney questions the metaphysical inherited truths of religion:

> Where does spirit live? Inside or outside
> Things remembered, made things, things unmade?
> What came first, the seabird's cry or the soul
>
> (ll 1-3, Sstting xxii, *ST*)

Unable to search for answers to his metaphysical disillusionment, he turns to the ghost of Yeats:

> What's the use of a held note or held line
> That cannot be assailed for reassurance?
> (Set questions for the ghost of W.B)
>
> (ll 10-12, Setting xii, *ST*)

Poem vi tells the story of the child Thomas Hardy who 'experimented with infinity' by pretending to be dead. Poem viii, is from Irish records. It is the story of the 'monks of Clonmacnoise', whose a ship is caught into the altar rails. The crewman tried to free it but it was all futile:

> 'This man can't bear our life here and will drown,'
>
> The abbot said, 'unless we help him.' So
> They did, the freed ship sailed, and man climbed back
>
> (ll 9-11, Squarings viii, *ST*)

The annals suggest the Catholic doctrine of salvation through the Church. The story is from Irish annals. Ireland is a Roman Catholic nation. One of the causes of the religious conflict in Ireland was opposition to the Protestant Church. The members of Protestant church reject the papal authority and some other fundamental doctrines of Roman Catholic Church, and believe in justification by faith. With the advent of colonialism, the colonizers' faith was publicized as supreme and the natives were religiously colonized. Heaney, through the annals, compensates for the hurt religious sentiments of the native Irish people.

In the sub-section 'Settings', poem xiii, Heaney advocates his practise of re-entering of childhood through the experienced adult vision. This is a frequently used *modus operandi* in Heaney's poetry.

> Re-enter this as the adult of solitude,
> The silence-folder and definite
>
> (ll 10-12, Setting xiii, *ST*)

The re-entry is for gaining a renewed vision which will be an amalgamation of innocence and experience. In poem xv, the memory of Heaney's father is evoked using the imagery of light:

> And strike this scene in gold too, in relief,
> So that a greedy eye cannot exhaust it:
> Stable straw, Rembrandt-gleam and burnish
>
> Where my father bends to a tea-chest packed with salt,
> The hurricane lamp held up at eye-level
> In his bunched left fist, his right hand foraging
>
> (ll 1-6, Setting xv, *ST*)

The poet exhorts the Dutch artist, Rembrandt van Rijn, a major religio-hitorical artist of the Golden Age who painted religious and historical paintings, to paint the picture of Heaney's father in gold. His father was not a famous religious or historical

personality. However, if he had given an opportunity he might have been a famous personality. He seems to be among the unknown, numberless and faceless people who had the skill to reach the peaks of success. It seems that the colonial destiny and divisions confined and cabined him to his rural environs. Heaney wants him to be in the annals and to be preserve in gold. He glorifies the rural routine of his farmer-father. Rembrandt now has to compromise with the themes of his paintings. He has to paint and preserve the rural routine of a farmer. Heaney thus brings compensations to his father. The idea of linking the familiar and filial with the memory is further explained in the poem xix:

> Memory as a building or a city
> Well lighted, well laid out, appointed with
> *Tableaux vivants* and costumed effigies-
>
> (ll 1-3, Setting xix, *ST*)

Memory is itself a combination of some 'fixed associations' which has 'Its own contents in meaningful order'. It is the collection of some concrete images and anecdotes with which the 'mind's eye' is preoccupied:

> Familiar places be linked deliberately
> With a code of images...
>
> (ll 10-11, Setting xix, *ST*)

This is how recollections and memories can be decoded in poetry. Associative thinking is a feature of Heaney's poetry.

In the sub-section, 'Crossings', Heaney 'sees' the 'things' physically as well as intuitively. He seems to deliberately associate the familiar with certain unfamiliar images. Poem xxvii is a blend of the physical and the metaphysical. 'Everything flows. Even the solid man', the poet launches on the metaphysical journey of the spirit and the experience is linked to the physical journey of Heaney's sister to London.

> And you'll be safe.' Flow on, flow on

The journey of the soul with its soul guide

(ll 10-11, Crossings xxvii, *ST*)

The journey symbolizes the 'crossings' of the soul. Heaney uses fluid imagery to symbolize the crossings. In poem xxxii, he speaks about the 'stations of soul' which reverberates with the religious conception of stations of cross:

Running water never disappointed.
Crossing water always furthered something.
Stepping stones were stations of the soul.

(ll 1-3, Crossings xxxii, *ST*)

The familiar 'causey', the 'keshes or the ford' remind him of his 'father's shade'.

I cannot mention keshes or the ford
Without my father's shade appearing to me

(*ll 8-9, Crossings xxxii, ST*)

The unknown addressee of the poem xxxiii transfers Heaney manner. The physical absence of the addressee takes away the beauty from the surroundings:

That morning tiles were harder, windows colder,
The raindrops on the pane more scourged, the grass
Barer to the sky, more wind-harrowed

Or so it seemed.

(ll 4-6, Crossings xxxiii, *ST*)

The bond between the speaker-poet and the addressee is so intense that it changes the whole world for him. The addressee seems to be Heaney's father. The house which 'he had planned', stands as a testimony to the manifestation of his idea.

Stood firmer than ever for its own idea
Like a printed X-ray for the X-rayed body.

(ll 11-12, Crossings xxxiii, *ST*)

The house is the revelation of the thoughts and dreams. It is symbolized as a 'printed X-ray' sheet, which is the exposure of the internal organs of 'X-rayed body'. The emptiness of the house underscores the absence of his father.

The 'newly dead come back' in the poem xxxiv. Heaney describes his encounter with the ghost of a 'Vietnam-bound' solider, a fellow passenger in the bus 'From San Francisco Airport into Berkeley'.

> Unsurprisable but still disappointed,
> Having to bear his farm-boy self again,
> His shaving cuts, his otherworldly brow.
>
> (ll 10-12, Crossings xxxiv, *ST*)

The ghost returns to his world of 'military base'. Heaney sees his rural self in the ghost's 'farm-boy self'. The implication is that Heaney desires to return to his own rural world. America is not his native land. He goes there on short-term educational engagements. The ghost is a psychological materialization of his longing for Ireland. The encounter with the spirit seems to be a Dantesque influence which has dominated Heaney's mind. In the concluding poem xxxvi, 'Crossings', the repercussion of a march is described along with a 'Scene from Dante'.

> ...since the policemen's torches
>
> Clustered and flicked and tempted us to trust
> Their unpredictable, attractive light.
> We were like herded shades who had tocross
>
> And did cross, in a panic, to the car
> Parker as we'd left it, that gave when we got in
> Like Charon's boat under the farming poets.
>
> (ll 6-12, Crossings xxxvi, *ST*)

Charon is a mythological ferryman in Greek mythology. He ferried the souls of the dead across the River Styx to Hades. The escape from the policemen is given a mythical

dimension. The pretentious colonial attitudes could not deceive the natives. The burden of colonialism made them resistant.

The last of the 'Squarings' sequence is the sub-section 'Squarings' itself. In this section Heaney alludes to sage Han Shan and the poet Henry Vaughan. In the poem xxxviii, a visit to 'Capitol by moonlight' deals with a 'privileged and belated' position:

> 'Down with form triumphant, long live,' (said I)
> 'Form mendicant and convalescent. We attend
> The come-back of pure water and prayer-wheel'
>
> To which a voice replied, 'of course we do.
> But others are in the Forum Café waiting,
> Wondering where we are. What'll you have?'
>
> (ll 7-12, Squarings xxxviii, *ST*)

The colonizer's culture makes the Irish 'mendicant and convalescent'. 'Mendicant' suggests the financial condition, of Ireland under colonial rule. Ireland was reduced to a land of beggars who had to live on colonial mercy. Inner resistance developed as a compensatory faculty to combat colonialism as implied by the use of word 'convalescent'. The poem is also a bitter treatise on the cultural subordination of Irish people. Colonial domination has made them culturally vacant and insensitive. They are deaf to their own voice and compromise with an existence of the 'other'.

Rural inheritance and memory as compensatory psychological phenomena becomes the theme of poems xl and xli.

> Out of that earth house I inherited
> A stack of singular, cold memory-weights
>
> (ll 10-11, Squarings xl, *ST*)

> The places I go back to have not failed
> But will not last. Waist-deep in cow-parsley'
> I re-enter the swim, riding or quelling

The very currents of memory is composed of,
Everything accumulated ever

(ll 4-8, Squarings xli, *ST*)

With such delineations, Heaney, thematically, comes very close to Wordsworth. Although Wordsworth belongs to the land of colonizers but for Heaney, he is not the epitome of British imperial ideologies like Spenser rather he is Heaney's Romantic model. In his discussion of the association of moods and modes between Wordsworth and Heaney, Geoffrey Hartman has remarked about how Heaney has followed in his predecessor's footsteps without becoming a mindless imitator:

> Through his unifying development of natural images in his modes of thinking, in his drawing upon social energies deriving from a sense of place, and through his notion of art itself working through sounds and rhythms that are natural forces within poetic shapings, Heaney is the contemporary inheritor of Wordsworth's legacy. The employment of memory is not just for the sake of restoration but for transformation and revision. [9]

In the poem xliv, Henry Vaughan's metaphysical declaration that the dead are '*All gone into the world of light?*' is analyzed with agnosticism but in the poem xlv, Heaney imagines a pleasurable fate in afterlife for his rural loved ones.

... They will re-enter
Dryness that was heaven on earth to them
Happy to eat the scones baked out of clay.

(ll 4-6, Squarings xlv, *ST*)

The concluding lines mingle the earthly with the celestial. The final Judgment is portrayed in the image of domesticity. Heaney elevates the earthly 'house-dust' to the spiritual 'pillar of radiant' in which God will appear on the Day of Judgment. This seems, without a doubt, a suitable celestial compensation for the rural people.

In this materialistic world, people are so deeply entrenched in avariciousness that they fail to notice the evil. The responsibility of 'seeing' the immaterialities now belongs

to people who contemplate e.g poets. In the anthology Heaney seems to be 'seeing things' physically as well as metaphysically.

The Spirit Level (1996)

The Spirit Level is a poetic representation of Heaney's recognition of human violence which is as ancient as Homer and as contemporary as the sectarian hostilities of Ireland. Heaney traces the darker side of human history from the Trojan War to the concentration camps of Nazis in World War II and links it to the colonial and sectarian cruelties in Northern Ireland. Much of the poetry, in the anthology, receives its impetus from Heaney's own restlessness and the discontent of Northern Ireland.

The technique of influences and intertextualities persist in the present anthology which relies profoundly on the works of exemplary figures. He invokes Homer and Hugh MacDiarmuid, quotes from the works of Dante and resurrects Aeschylus, translates Martin Sorescu and cites the example of Hans Memling, pays reverence to Osip Mandelstam and alludes to James Joyce. Heaney, in this process of 'adoption and adaptation', can not be charged with plagiarisms. In these attempts he transcends the frontiers of national literature and produces world literature in which, intertextualities, influences and translations are indispensable. David Damrosch rightly points out 'World literature is writings that gains in translation'.[11]

The canon has always been influenced by translations, allusions and intertextualities. Works of major writers have been enriched by classical allusions, references and citations. Heaney, in the poem 'Quoting' from *Seeing Things*, acknowledged the power of quotation 'Talking about it isn't good enough / But quoting from it at least demonstrates / The virtue of an art that knows its mind'.

Heaney searches for inspiration as well as solutions in the works of classical writers. He desires to widen the dimensions of contemporary Irish literature, so that it can be appreciated and understood by the literary circles across the globe. Thus, the poet will

achieve a literal compensation for the Irish people who were misrepresented in the literature written by the hegemony.

The poem 'The Rain Stick' communicates the transforming power of the poetic imagination, which elevates the physical commonplace and mundane to the echelon of spiritual by bizarre. The poem is a celebration of water, the quintessence of all the existence on the earth, as it flows through the 'cactus stalk' and then to the dry portion of the land nourishing all types of flora and fauna. The movement of water generates an unexpected music from the plant.

> Downpour, sluice-rush, spillage and backwash
> Come flowing through. You stand there like a pipe
> Being played by water, you shake it again lightly
> And diminuendo runs through all its scales
> Like a gutter stopping trickling.
>
> (ll 4-8, 'The Rain Stick' *SL*)

The sudden gush of water revitalizes and refreshes the arid and barren ground. The music created and the transmutation can be experienced through the sensitiveness of the textual representation. Heaney credits poetry for its insight into truth. In his Nobel lecture, he acknowledged the power of poetry:

> I credit poetry ...for being itself and for being a help, for making possible a fluid and restorative relationship between the mind's centre and its circumference... I credit it because the credit is due to it, in our time and in all time, for its truth to life, in every sense of that place.[12]

The poem conceived and dispensed in the spiritual mode outlines the synchronization of the cosmos where every element individually contributes to the harmony of existence. Heaney asserts this law of correspondence in 'The First Words', where he translates a verse of Romanian poet Marin Sorescu, 'Let everything flow / Up to the four elements, / Up to water and earth and fire and air'. Richard Tillinghast claims that many poems in this collection have much to say about the transcendental law

of compensation- 'about balance, equilibrium and karma'[13]. The Buddhist and Hindu philosophies propagate the beliefs of rebirth and reincarnation. The subsequent principle of 'karma' states that the quality of a being's current life and also of future lives is determined by that being's action in this and the previous life. The ordinary and mundane, through the transfigurative vision, is elevated to the celestial level and the final drop of water, in 'The Rain Stick' is exalted to the ecstasy of 'entering heaven'.

The magic of poetic imagination transforms a County Derry yardman from Heaney's childhood into the persona of the seventh-century Yorkshire poet-herdsman Caedmon of 'Whitby-sur-Moyola'. Heaney feels 'lucky to have known' Caedmon, 'the perfect yardman' who 'with his full bucket / and armfuls of clean straw' is 'Unabsorbed in what he had to do'. The recollection of Heaney's childhood yardman strikes a parallel with the poet-herdsman Caedmon who was dedicated to and completely involved in his work. The interrelationship between Caedmon and Derry yardman is related to their association with the rural and the ideal which they consolidated in their work and through their uncompromising attitudes, which Heaney recollects and acknowledges.

> I never saw him once with his hands joined
> Unless it was a case of eyes to heaven
>
> (ll 12-13, 'Whitby-sur-Moyala' *SL*)

The image of 'hands joined' suggests servility and compromise. However, both the poet Caedmon and the yardman were self-respecting and dignified people. In the days of colonialism it was very common for the natives to bow down before hegemony. Heaney's yardman stands apart from the mass displaying self-worth and unwavering confidence. Thus, Heaney elevates the ordinary, unlettered yardman, long forgotten by the people to the level of the learned seventh-century poet remembered for his erudite writings. Heaney's efforts acknowledge and immortalize the yardman and furnish him with compensation for his praiseworthy yet unacknowledged determinations.

Heaney occupies a major position in the contemporary literary canon yet his agrarian sensibilities exhort his associations with those who are close to the earth. The

poem 'At Banagner' is a celebration of expertise of the peripatetic tailor in Banagher, a town in County Offaly in the Republic of Ireland. Heaney celebrates the dexterity of 'The journeyman tailor' who with his magical 'touch has the power to turn to cloth again'. The tailor contributes to the order and harmony of the world. He 'holds the needle just off centre, squinting / And licks the thread and licks and sweeps' and fulfills one of the vital needs of humanity and civility- the need to cover bodies. Such traveling tailors can be easily found in the countryside but it is difficult to locate this blue collar category in poetry.

Heaney's admiration spirals in the concluding stanza where he bestows the image of the Enlightened Saint Buddha (563?-483? B.C) on the tailor. Heaney honours him in elevated terms:

> My Buddha of Banagher, the way
> Is opener for your being in it.
>
> (ll 23-24, 'At Banagher'*SL*)

Buddha, was an Indian philosopher and the founder of Buddhism, was born in Lumbinī, Nepal. Buddha is regarded as one of the greatest human beings, a man of character, penetrating vision, compassion, and profound thought. He is not merely a founder of a great new religion, but a reformer who revolted against Hindu hedonism, asceticism, extreme spiritualism, and the caste system. He stood for peace and harmony. In one of the legends associated with Buddha, he exhibits extreme patience as he waited under the Bodh tree for Enlightenment and on acquiring it, renounced a luxurious life and a kingdom and led a life of an itinerant preacher serving humanity.

Heaney sings paeans to the tailor, who in the poet's views, with his commitment to order and harmony, with his wandering life, and with his indifference to comforts, recalls Buddha. Heaney's tribute can not be regarded as blasphemous as Buddha is a universal saint. The tailor is a local 'Buddha of Banagher'. Globalization and the 'melting pot' multi-culturalism of the post modern world have produced many versions of

Buddha. He transcends the religious boundaries of Buddhism and metamorphoses into the lesser notion of 'local Buddha'. Writers, across the globe, have evolved different concepts of Buddha. One of such prolific dramatist, novelist and filmmaker, Hanif Kureishi, whose works focus around the lives of Asian immigrants in urban Britain, has constructed his version of local Buddha in the novel *Buddha of Suburbia* (1990). Heaney, also, culturally constructs his adaptation of local Buddha to lionize the tailor. Heaney has earlier celebrated the craftsmanship of the roofer in 'Thatcher', the skills of a blacksmith in 'The Forge' and has compensated for their dislocations and loss of identity through glorifying them and their dying skills in his poetry. Richard Tillinghast suggests 'The poem is reminiscent of 'Adam's Curse', by Yeats, where the writing of poetry is called 'Our stitching and unstiching'.[14]

The sensitivity of the imagination and its power of transmute vision are dealt with in 'At the Wellhead'. Heaney talks to his blind neighbour Rosie Keenan 'Who played the piano all day in her bedroom' to 'sing yourself to where the singing comes from'. The 'blind-from-birth, sweet-voiced, with drawn musician' has been lonely throughout life. Her handicap has isolated her. The notes that issue from her piano are compared to the sound of water.

> Her notes came out to like hoisted water
> Ravelling off a bucket at the wellhead
> Where next thing we'd be listening hushed and awkward.
>
> (ll 12-14, 'At the Wellhead' *SL*)

In Heaney's childhood a bucket of water drawn from this well, stood in the scullery. It emerges as a symbol of poetic imagination in *Crediting Poetry*:

> Ahistorical, presexual, in suspension between the archaic and the modern, we were as susceptible and impressionable as the drinking water that stood in a bucket in our scullery: every time a passing train made the earth shake, the surface of that water used to ripple delicately, concentrically, and in utter silence.[15]

Destiny deprived Rosie of her eyes but her strong will and persistence helped her to overcome all odds. Her sensory organs were active. She stood apart from the crowd. The poet conceived her '...like a silver vein in heavy clay'. The poet and Rosie are bound by the ability to see with feelings:

> Her hands were active and her eyes were full
> Of open darkness and a watery shine.
>
> She knew us by our voices. She'd say she 'saw'
> Whoever or whatever. Being with her
> Was intimate and helpful, like a cure
> You didn't notice happening. When I read
> A poem with Keenan's well in it, she said,
> 'I can see the sky at the bottom of it now.'
>
> (ll 21-28, 'At the Wellhead' *SL*)

Heaney, in the poem, does not pity her for her blindness, rather he praises her determination. She 'saw' with her intuition and mind's eye. Heaney's emotional support to the 'lonelier' neighbour and appreciation of her willpower highlight the need of awareness and respect which physically challenged people require from society. Heaney throughout the poem, supports her with emotional strength. Rosie might have been living a pathetic life if she lacked willpower. She however worked as a singer and musician. Heaney acknowledges her firm strength of character which compensates for all her losses. Heaney's poem is offered as a compensation for what life did not give her.

A mature vision can work miracles. Heaney claims that a positive reflection on things can bring out the best from them. In 'Mint', he advocates casting a constructive and optimistic vision. The 'clump of small dusty nettles / Growing wild at the gable of the house...spelled promise / And newness'. The failures of vision condemned them as 'disregarded':

> Like the disregarded ones we turned against
> Because we'd failed them by our disregard.
>
> (ll 15-16, 'Mint' *SL*)

Heaney appeals to the people to recast a vision of the 'ignored' of the society in prejudice against the 'ignored' is a result of apathy. The 'ignored' or marginalized by society can be rehabilitated if they are treated as equal. Heaney seems to be talking of the 'other' of society. The 'other' of the society may be physically challenged people, women, or people from the lower strata of society, unlettered rustics or colonized natives. Societies often fail them and misjudge their potentials and deny them rights because of some preconceived notions. A revised and renewed vision will serve as a compensation for their subversive position. Heaney's poetry aims to restructure society with a balanced vision.

The innocent childhood imagination transforms 'A Sofa in the Forties' to a train and the historically awake, mature conscious adult-persona of the poet is reminded of the 'Ghost-train...Death gondola' which took their victims to the Nazi concentration camps of Germany and Poland during World War II. The perfect childhood delight is shadowed by the knowledge of atrocities. The children's pretence that their sofa is a railway train is nostalgically recollected:

> All of us on the sofa in a line, kneeling
> Behind each other, eldest down to the youngest,
> Elbow going like pistons, for this was a train
>
> And between the jamb-wall and the bedroom door
> Our speed and distance were inestimable.
> First we shunned, then we whistled, then
>
> Somebody collected the invisible
> For tickets and very gravely punched it
> As carriage after carriage under us
>
> Moved faster, *chooka-chook*, that sofa legs
> Went giddy and unreachable ones
>
> (ll 1-12, 'A Sofa in the Forties' *SL*)

The poem is the entry into 'history and ignorance'. Innocent pleasure is corrupted with adult vision in the concluding section where the children's 'only job' is 'to sit, eyes

Concentration camps of Jews during World War II

Jews being taken to death camps.

Mass grave of Jews at Nazi camps.

All the images are from Microsoft® Student 2007 [DVD]. Redmond, WA: Microsoft Corporation, 2006.

straight ahead, and be transported'. The poem ironically contrasts the initial innocence with consequent experience, and ignorance with historical consciousness.

The Hindu and Buddhist doctrine of 'Karma' is preeminently evident in the poem 'St Kevin and the Blackbird' where Heaney propagates the essence of 'Karma' which is 'To labour and not to seek reward'. The theory emphasizes on maintaing the righteousness of actions and deeds with no desire for rewards. The righteous deeds will remunerate the doer with celestial compensation. In the *Bhagvat Gita*, an important Hindu text, Lord Krishna states that the best way to be free of debt is by selfless actions. 'Karma' is sometime translated as 'destiny' in English but it does not imply the absence of freedom of action or freewill that destiny does. The doctrine leaves the individual free to make his own choices. The poem disseminates the message of self-sacrifice and self-negation through the figure of St Kevin, who in the poem, becomes the embodiment of virtues. The saint metamorphoses into the spirit of Christ, the supreme emblem of self-sacrifice. The saint is presented performing the customary religious rituals 'kneeling, arms stretched out' in his monastic cell in Glendalough, County Wicklow, in imitation of Christ. It is a posture of patience as Heaney claims in the Noble lecture.

> This is the story of another monk holding himself up valiantly in the posture of endurance. It is said that once upon a time St Kevin was kneeling with his arms stretched out in the form of a cross in Glendalough, a monastic site not too far from where we lived in the County Wicklow....as Kevin knelt and prayed, a blackbird mistook his out stretched hand for some kind of roost and swooped down upon it, laid a clutch of eggs in it and proceeded to nest in it as if it were a branch of tree. Then, overcome with pity and constrained by his faith to love the life of all creatures great and small, Kevin stayed immobile for hours and days and nights and weeks, holding out his hand until the eggs hatched and the fledglings grew wings.....St Kevin's story is, as I say, a story out of Ireland. But it strikes me that it could equally well come out of India or Africa or the Artic or the Americas. By which I do not mean merely to consign it to typology of folktales, or to dispute its values by questing its culture-bound status within a multi-cultural context.[16]

The legend of St Kevin becomes a paradigm for the people to judge their contribution of endurance and self-sacrifice sans any rewards. Heaney asks the readers to

'imagine being Kevin'. St Kevin's story stands as an example of supreme virtue of humanity in the society which is drowned in mercenaries, hatred, selfishness and blood-thirstiness. Heaney seems to propagating the view that the only way to rescue humanity out of the current circumstances is through self-sacrifices and endurance. Through the implied Hindu and Buddhist philosophy of 'Karma', and in the representation of St Kevin a lesser extension of Christ, the saviour of humanity, Heaney's Irish folktale universalizes the solution for the whole humanity. These humanistic concerns elevate Heaney somewhere in the same hierarchy.

Heaney goes into raptures over his epileptic brother's ability to compensate for the murkiness of his life with humour and imagination in 'Keeping Going'. It traces the journey of sibling-togetherness from their childhood to adulthood. The mutual, lighthearted, juvenile, whimsy always provided them with a sense of relief and happiness. With the playful sense of whimsy, Heaney's brother converted the monotonous and backbreaking task of white washing in a kind of play. He pretended to be a 'piper' with 'a kitchen chair on / Upside down on...shoulder' and presumed 'a whitewash brush for a sporran'.

Heaney recollects childhood superstitions when to 'Piss at the gable...will congregate' dead, where 'When a thorn tree was cut down / You broke your arm' and 'When a stranger bird perched for days on the byre roof' meant dread. Superstitions are universal although they are ethically relative to a particular society. The archaic beliefs and superstitions, though most of the time contradictory to rationalism, attach society to its cultural roots. Heaney, as a rationally evolved being, contemplates whether belief systems 'Happened or not'. The poet wields the power of transformation. The famous 'Witches scene' from Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, instigates a rural response to a lost culture.

> That scene, with Macbeth helpless and desperate
> In his nightmare—when he meets the hags again
> And sees the apparitions in the pot—
> I felt at home with that one all right. Hearth,
> Steam and ululation,...
>
> (ll 39-43, 'Keeping Going' *SL*)

Heaney's allusions to the 'Witches scene' do not elicit any parallels between Macbeth's vaulting ambitions and the poet's own. The witches' cauldron transports him to the hearth of the old Irish kitchens. For Heaney, identity is deeply rooted in culture. When things fall apart, he returns to the lost centre to reaffirm his identity. He feels 'at home' with rural associations such as hearths. The poem reiterates the sense of comfort in bucolic belongings, as earlier dealt with in 'Fodder' in *Wintering Out* (1972). Heaney lamented the loss of the hearth in Irish homes in *The Place of Writings*:

> ...the transition from a condition where your space, the space of the world had a determined meaning and a sacred position, to a condition where space was a neuter geometrical disposition without any emotional or inherited meaning. I watched it happen in Irish homes when we first saw a house built where there was no chimney, and then you'd go into rooms without a grate – so no hearth, which in Latin means focus[17]

The pastoral soothe, the childhood fears, superstitions and playful pretences are contrasted with discomfort, the sinister adult awarenesses of factors promoting sectarian and political divisions. He writes about the murder of an acquaintance:

> Grey matter like gruel flecked with blood
> In spatters on the whitewash. A clean spot
> Where his head has been, other strains subsumed.
>
> (ll 51-53, 'Keeping Going' *SL*)

The victim dies 'Feeding the gutter with his copious blood'. Heaney's moving description captures the trauma of 1970s and 1980s in Northern Ireland. Heaney compromised with his status as a poet to show the harsh realities of contemporary Ireland in his poetry. In the Nobel lecture, he referred to the price that he paid for being a Northern Irish poet.

> I found myself in the mid-nineteen-seventies in another small house, this time in County Wicklow south of Dublin, with a young family of my own and slightly less imposing radio set, listening to the rain in trees and to the news of bombings closer to home- not only those by the provisional I.R.A in Belfast but equally atrocious assaults in Dublin by loyalist paramilitaries from the north.....I heard, for example, that one particularly

> sweet-natured school friend had been interned without trail because he was suspected of having been involved in a political killing.[18]

The dialectics of childhood memories and adult realities are compensated for with moments of togetherness. A touching accolade is offered to the 'good stamina' of the poet's brother. His cheerful demeanor compensates for the darkness of his life and makes him 'keeping going'. His motivation is responsible for his survival. Heaney accentuated the necessitate of virtue in the commencement address that he delivered at the University of North Carolina on 12 May 1996, 'Getting started, keeping going, getting started again- in art and in life, seems to me this the essential rhythm not only of achievement but of survival'.[19]

Resurrection and reinvention through recollection elevates a bricklayer to the pedestal of the heroic, legendary Odysseus of Homer's epic *Odyssey*. Odysseus, according to the Greek legend, is an epic hero, ruler of the island of Ithaca and one of the leaders of the Greek army in the Trojan War. The Roman equivalent is Ulysses. Homer's *Odyssey* narrates Odysseus's adventures describes his, ultimate return home ten years after the fall of Troy.

All through Homer's *Iliad*, he is depicted as a courageous, insightful, cunning warrior, and he is awarded the renowned shield of the Greek warrior Achilles on the latter's death. Odysseus was responsible for bringing the Greek heroes Neoptolemus and Philoctetes to Troy for the final stage of the conflict. In the *Odyssey* it is said that he proposed the stratagem of the Trojan Horse, the means by which Troy was conquered. In the works of later classical writers, particularly those of the Greek poet Pindar, the Greek playwright Euripides, and the Roman poet Virgil, Odysseus is characterized as a gutless and devious politician.

Heaney remembers the bloodied hand and the 'Wound that I saw / In glutinous colour fifty years ago'. The bricklayer is clothed in epic dimensions. His trowel is portrayed mythlogically and it transforms into Odysseus's sword:

> I loved especially the trowel's shine,

Its edge and apex always coming clean
And brightening itself by mucking in .
It looked light but felt heavy as weapon

(ll 18-21, 'Damson' *SL*)

The brick layer becomes a Homeric parallel 'Like Odysseus in Hades', the Grecian underworld inhabited by dead souls, encountering the local 'Ghost with their tongues out for lick of blood'. They are the soul of the brutally murdered Irish victims. The gravity of the epic is amalgamated with the interpretation of contemporary circumstances. The ghosts have a desperate desire for reparation as they are 'all unhealed':

And some of them still rigged in bloody gear.
Drive them back to the doorstep or the road
Where they lay in their own blood once, in the hot
Nausea and last gasp of dear life.

(ll 28-31, 'Damson' *SL*)

Heaney amalgamates the past and the present with mythology and reality to create a picture of the sufferings of his people. However, he seems to be uncomfortable with the blend as it brings the memory of the savagery and maliciousness. Hence in the concluding stanza the Homeric parallel is shunned:

... But not like him-
Builder, not sacker, your shield the mortar board-

(ll 36-37, 'Damson' *SL*)

The removal of the ghosts and repudiation of the Homeric parallel, suggests Heaney's desire for a nonviolent compensation for the victims. He wishes the ghosts to be driven 'back to the wine-dark taste of home' where they could have 'the smell of damson simmering in a pot' and relish the 'Jam ladled thick and steaming down the sunlight'. Heaney creates two contrasting panoramas- one where the world is violence-ridden, drowned in blood and gore and other, peaceful world, where the comforts of

home compensate for the callousness. Happy homes captured in poetry provide solace and serve as a compensation to the world weary poet.

In the poem 'Weighing In', 'The 56 lb. weight. A solid iron / Unit of negation' raises a debate. The poet engages himself in explaining the need for 'principle of bearing up...And bearing out'. The root cause of much of the violence and indifferences, at personal, social, nation and international level, are the lack of endurances, tolerance and uncompromising attitudes. The only way to a peaceful society is through compromising with own self and through acting rationally when dealing with the offensive behaviour of others:

> Balance the intolerable in others
> Against our own, having to abide
> Whatever we settled for and settled into
>
> Against our better judgement. Passive
> Suffering makes the world go round.
> Peace on earth, men of good will, all that
>
> Holds good only as long as the balance holds

(ll 16-22, 'Weighing In' *SL*)

Peace is not just absence of war but creating conditions which will perpetuate it. This means eradicating conflicts through mutual compromises and peaceful co-existence. Peace is the responsibility of every individual but the initiatives are judged by the parameters which promote harmony and peace. The so- called harbingers of the peace of the world, the British colonizers of the past and the American invaders of contemporary world, claim that the main reason for their invasions are not to maintain their own interest but to safeguard civilization. In the process of restructuring society, as they claim to be doing, they forget about mutual adjustments and consciously or unconsciously deprive people of their basic human rights. Heaney propagates the theory of tolerance and harmonious living in which the act of balancing oneself is indispensable. Heaney's negotiations are raised to a higher ethical plane through the parable of 'Blindfolded Jesus' and Herod's army. The blasphemous army mocked Jesus but He 'didn't strike back':

... To cast the stone.
Not to do some time, not to break with
The obedient one you hurt yourself into

Is to fail the hurt, the self, the ingrown rule.
Prophesy who stuck thee! When soldiers mocked
Blindfolded Jesus and he didn't strike back

They were neither shamed nor edified, although
Something was made manifest- the power
Of power not exercised, of hope inferred

By the powerless forever...

(ll 25-34, 'Weighing In' *SL*)

Heaney regards the exercise of exerting power over the weak as 'a deep mistaken chivalry'. Since time immemorial, the intoxication of supremacy has forced the strong to exercise their power over the powerless. Human history stands as a testimony to implementation of power over the weak. This is a universal psychology of colonialism. The Aryan invasions and British colonization of ancient India, the Anglo Norman invasions, the British colonization, the Norwegian and the Viking invasions of Ireland and the colonization of Africans and Arabs are the results of the colonizing enterprise.

Postcolonialism has widened the dimensions of the term 'colony'. Looking through the lens of postcolonialism, the weak become the colony of the strong. e.g women in patriarchy turn out to be colony of men, the have nots are to be colony of haves, the unprivileged become the colony of the privileged. Heaney, as a postcolonial poet has taken up the task of bestowing rights to all humanity. In the world of indifferences and inequality the parable of Jesus' endurance against Herod's army stands like a yardstick for all the 'powerfuls' of the world:

Two sides to every question, yes, yes, yes...
But every now and then, just weighing in
Is what it must come down to, and without

Any self-exculpation or self pity.

(ll 37-40, 'Weighing In' *SL*)

Heaney realizes that compromises are vital. In the mad tussle of dialectics between strong and weak the approach of '*mea culpa*' or the sense of apology is lost. The answer to all the problems of the world, as propagated by the poet-preacher, is in 'the power / Of power not exercised'. Heaney considers endurance and compromise high virtues. Tillinghast thinks the poem is about 'the subtle reciprocal economies that makes our lives workable and bearable'.[20]

In the 'Mycenae Lookout', Heaney continues with the theme of war. He presents a mytholized version of violent Irish political and colonial history. Heaney adopts Aeschylus's *Agamemnon*, the first play in the trilogy of Oresteia and contemplates on the story of Atreus and the ten year Trojan War serves as a foil to the peace processes in Northern Ireland. The Peace and Reconciliation Group (PRG) was trying to establish peace and the provisional Irish Republican Army declared unconditional ceasefire. Heaney reinvents and modifies the Greek legend to fit his context. However, in the poem there are only implied references to the peace process. Heaney's 'watchman' has a more significant role than the watchman of Agamemnon. Heaney invests the watchman with his own persona as detached observer and hesitant commentator who does not articulate any strong political judgements:

> That killing-fest, the life-wrap and world-wrong
> It brought to pass, still augured and endured.
> I'd dream of blood in bright webs in a ford,
> Of bodies raining down like tattered meat
> On top of me asleep- and me the lookout
>
> (ll 4-8,Watchman's War, 'Myceane Lookout' *SL*)

Corcoran criticizes the poet-persona for his silence:

> The watchman becomes expositor, commentator, judge, confidant and visionary, in all of which roles he is both involved and detached, and accessory to the crimes and guilts he evokes who is their articulator and interpreter. The poem finds thereby Heaney's most unpredictable and original self-representation as a poet who has himself, through his career, been drawn to commentary on, has withdrawn from propagandist involvement, in a lengthy, ongoing local internecine war.[21]

Heaney, in his visions of violence and peace, maintains a compromised outlook. He wishes to break his silence which is not an ordinary silence but 'cross-purposed silence' as demanded by the times. In the fourth part 'The Nights', he holds himself partially responsible for the king's assassination as he as a poet was aware of the conspiracy. The narrator-poet is simultaneously within the myth and outside it. The omniscience of his position loads him with greater guilt:

> The king should have been told,
> but who was there to tell him
> if not myself? I willed them
> to cease and break hold
> of my cross-purposed silence
> but still kept on, all smiles
>
> (ll 10-15,The Night, 'Myceane Lookout' *SL*)

The mute witnessing emphasizes the iniquitous nature of the bystanders in the second section 'Cassandra'. Unlike in the real legend she is not protected. She is in a horrific modern rendering 'camp-fucked' by the soldiers. The bystanders watch her and do not save her. They are like animals filled with desire to rape her all over again. Brute force surfaces in the following lines:

> And the result-
> ant shock desire
> in bystanders
> to do it to her
>
> (ll 45-48,Cassandra, 'Myceane Lookout' *SL*)

Many Irish girls in sexual relationships with British soldiers shared the fate of Cassandra. The poem shares the theme of 'Punishment' (*North*, 1975). The insult upon injury inflicted on women has no compensation. Heaney casts the contemporary situation of Northern Ireland within the framework of the Trojan War. Cassandra was not the only one who met such a fate. Other women were also raped and murdered:

> But in the end Troy's mothers
> bore their burnt in alley,

bloodied cot and bed.
The war put all men mad

(ll 43-46,The Nights, 'Myceane Lookout' *SL*)

The violent imagery, the blood-spattered scenes and the faithless characters, all fit the Irish context. Heaney, in one of his essays commented on the role of poetry in wartime:

> Faced with the brutality of the historical onslaught, they are practically useless. Yet they verify our singularity, they strike and stake out the ore of the self which lies at the base of every individuated life. In one sense the efficacy of poetry is nil.....no lyric has stopped a tank. In another sense it is unlimited. It is like writing in the sand in the face of accusers and accused are left speechless and renewed.[22]

In the Gospel of John, there is an episode where Jesus indirectly answers the scribes and Pharisees, by writing on the sand. This episode is discussed by the poet in relation to his poetry:

> The drawing of those characters is like poetry, a break with the usual life but not absconding from it. Poetry, like the writing, is arbitrary and marks time in every possible sense of that phrase. It does not say to the accusing crowd or to the helpless accused, "Now a solution will take place," it does not propose to be instrumental or effective. Instead in the rift between what is going to happen and whatever we would wish to happen, poetry holds attention for a space, functions not as a distraction but as pure concentration, a focus where our power to concentrate is concentrated back on ourselves. [23]

Amidst the brutality and pandemonium of war Heaney sees a ray of hope. The turmoil of war is softened with the image of fresh water:

At Troy, at Athens, what I most clearly
See and nearly smell
Is the fresh water.

(ll 1-3,His Reverie of Water, 'Myceane Lookout' *SL*)

The image of water develops into the image of the well. Heaney uses the well as a symbol of poetic inspiration and poetic imagination:

> And the well at Athens too.
> Or rather the old lifeline leading up
> And down from Acropolis

(ll 13-15,His Reverie of Water, 'Myceane Lookout' *SL*)

Corcoran claims that 'fiction of watchman and Agros becomes virtually transparent to this poet [Heaney] and his own writing, since the alternative is figured in an imagery of water, wells and pump which Heaney's work has made its own, and frequently made into a symbol for the source of poetic inspiration'[24]. The ladder of Troy is transformed into a ladder 'that ran / deep into a well-shaft' and finally 'deeper in themselves' symbolizing the cavernous crevasses of the human mind.

Heaney's Dantean 'The Flight Path' is in response to the violence and the circumstances of the 'dirty protest' begun by 'Ciaran Nugent', one of the Provisional IRA men, in 'Long Kesh' internment camp in Northern Ireland in late nineteen- seventies which led to the hunger strikes of nineteen-eighties. In 1976, the British government removed the special status granted to the prisoners imprisoned for political acts. The prisoners launched the 'blanket protest' in which they refused to wear prison clothes and donned blankets instead. This was followed by the 'dirty protest' where they refused to clean their cells and smeared excrement on the walls. When these tricks failed, prisoners started hunger strikes in which ten prisoners died. These deaths could not move the British government but support for the political wing of Provisional IRA gained great momentum:

> The jail walls in those months were smeared with shite.
> Out of Long Kesh after his dirty protest
> The red eyes were the eyes of Ciaran Nugent
> Like something of Dante's scurfy hell

(ll 33-36, 'The Flight Path IV' *SL*)

Heaney becomes a mental-traveler journeying through the physical and metaphysical realms. He passes through Dante's hell and also makes a trip on 'One bright may morning, nineteen seventy-nine' in 'the 'red-eye special' from New York' and then in 'the train to Belfast'. Heaney adopts the theme of incarceration and starvation of Ugolino's sons and rehistoricizes the hellish imprisonment and self-starvation of IRA hunger strikers. The scene is closes with a quotation of three lines from 'Ugolino':

> *When he had said all this, his eyes rolled*
> *And his teeth, like a dog's teeth clamping round a bone,*
> *Bit into the skull and again took hold.*
>
> (ll 40-42, 'The Flight Path IV' *SL*)

In the cannibalistic scene of *Inferno* XXXIII, after concluding his vocalizations with Dante and Virgil, Ugolino turns away to chew on the neck of his enemy. Thus, invoking the monstrous tendencies of aggression, abhorrence, and antagonism. Nugent does not die in the prison but Heaney degrades him as an Irish Ugolino, the extension of Dante's Ugolino. He is presented in a negative aspect which exposes his cannibalistic propensities after unfolding his maltreatment and incarceration. Heaney finds similarities of situations in his own predicament and Dante's parallel in which he not only encounters Ciaran Nugent, but also sees the reflection of his own history, politics and poetic responsibilities.

> 'When for fuck's sake, are you going to write
> Something for us?' 'If I do write something,
> Whatever it is, I'll be writing for myself.'
>
> (ll 29-31, 'The Flight Path IV' *SL*)

For Heaney, poetry is a negotiation, a vehicle of expression of his thoughts. Through out his poetry, he searches for images and symbols to suit his predicament. His 'digs' down into academic disciplines, adopts and adapts, rehistoricizes and intertextualizes as redresses of his situations. In this process, he believes 'there is tendency to place a counter-reality in the scales- a reality which may be only imagined but which nevertheless has weight because it is imagined within the gravitational pull of

the actual and can therefore hold its own and balance out against the historical situation.'[25]

In the poem 'Tollund', Heaney returns to Jutland. The title retrospects the poem 'Tollund Man' in *North* (1975). However, it does not use the landscape of bogs or the metaphor of the bog body in any germane sense. However, the poem serves as an important milestone in the poetic resurrection of the Tollund Man which remained from *North* to *District and Circle* (2006). The poem was written on a 'Sunday morning' after the announcement of cessation of hostilities accomplished by the united efforts of Irish and British governments. Jutland, which has been a place of ritualistic killings, has been transformed into a 'Townland of Peace', where serenity and calmness pervades making even the wilderness 'user-friendly':

> The by-roads had their names on them in black
> And white; it was user-friendly outback
> Where we stood footloose, at home beyond the tribe,
>
> (ll 18-20, 'Tollund' *SL*)

The impact of ceasefire seems not only confined to Ireland but to Jutland. Heaney compensates for the ritualistic carnage of the earlier poem 'Tollund Man' in particular and the turmoil of the violence-ridden poem of the anthology in general. The sense of hope and reconciliation envelops the poem. Peace, as it appears, has been accomplished in Jutland. The genocide has been brought to an end. This brings the hope that peace would soon reign in Ireland and the sectarian killing would be terminated.

The theme of the journey continues in the concluding poem 'Postscript', of the anthology, where the poet embarks on a car journey, reminding the readers of a similar journey in 'The Peninsula' in *Door into Dark* (1969). The time and place is defined with the concrete details.

> And some time make the time to drive out west
> Into County Clare, along the Flaggy Shore,
> In September or October...
>
> (ll 1-3, 'Postscript' *SL*)

The elemental forces of nature 'are working off each other'. The wild, foamy and glittering ocean, the stones, the 'surface of slate-grey lake' and 'the flocks of swans' with 'their feathers roughed and ruffling, white on white' and 'Their fully grown headstrong-looking heads' work towards the harmonious subsistence of the universe. Heaney's journey is not an ordinary one rather it is a journey of apprehensions, articulations and acceptance of the unpredicted and spectacular. In the Nobel lecture Heaney described his journeys which 'turned out to be a stepping stone rather than a destination'.[26]

Heaney, through out the anthology, embarks on many journeys to mental, moral and physical dominions. Each journey enriches his awareness and helps him in comprehending the situations. The anthology could be called 'a book of movements' which begins with the physical movement of water in 'The Rain Stick', and keeps its momentum in the journey of childhood to adulthood in 'A Sofa in the Forties' and 'Keeping Going', in the mental and physical journey in 'The Flight Path', the movements in 'The Swing' and 'The Walk' and culminates in the journey to 'Tollund'. Heaney's poetry underscores the suggestion that one has to compromise with the familiar and filial confinements in order to gain mature insight.

Electric Light (2001)

Seamus Heaney's anthology *Electric Light* is a compendium of poetic genres. It treasures almost all known poetic styles. Heaney has embroidered the collectanea with nature poems, elegies, eclogues and epigrams, poems of meditation on origins and deaths and poems of dedication to literary friends. Poetic returns to and revivals of the poet's own childhood spent at Anahorish as well as of classical Arcadia are merged into contemporary experience.

The collection unwraps with the iridescent nature poem, 'At Toomebridge', 'Where the flat water / Come pouring the weir out of Lough Neagh'. The water falls 'shining to the continuous / Present of the Bann'. The stream of water makes him conscious of the horrible colonial past of the place of 'checkpoint' and 'Where the rebel

boy was hanged in '98.' The place carries the remnants of the colonial conflicts between Ireland and England and the sectarian violence between Protestants and Catholics. Heaney's colonial consciousness has been, time and again, tied up with the territories of Lough Neagh and Toomebridge.

The poems in the earlier anthologies such as 'Requiem for the Croppies', 'A Lough Neagh Sequence' (*Door into the Dark*, 1966), 'Toome' (*Wintering Out*, 1972), 'The Toome Road' (*Field Work*, 1979), explore the themes of Irish landscapes which are imprinted upon Heaney's consciousness. The memory of the violence becomes a psychological trigger. The colonial exploitation of the eel fishing rights at Lough Neagh, which sparked conflicts between the Irish fishermen and the colonizers and the massacre of Croppies boys at Vinegar Hills in Co. Wexford in 1798, arouses a desire for compensation for the erroneous wrongs done to the community.

Heaney uses the imagery of flow of ions from Electrochemistry to define the poetic process.

> Where negative ions in the open air
> Are poetry to me.
>
> (ll 8-9, 'At Toomebridge', *EL*)

The flow of electrons, negatively charged particles found in an atom, produces electric current. Electrons, along with neutrons and protons, comprise the basic building blocks of all atoms. Each electron carries a small electric charge. When the stream of electron moves, the flow of charge is called electric current which illuminates electric lights and other current dependent machines. The reminiscence of the colonial cruelties charges the current in the poetic process of the learned poet. The electric current produced illuminates the world and darkness vanishes. Similarly, the poetic current enlightens the poet's imagination and the world is recharged. The imagery of generation of electric current seems to be an apt beginning the poet as well as the anthology *Electric Light*.

Heaney seems to share the Heraclitus's philosophy that every thing in the world flows and nothing is static. Heraclitus*(540?-480? B.C) was from Ephesus. He continued the search for the Ionian for a primary substance, which he claimed to be fire. He is believed to have anticipated the modern theory of energy.

He maintained that every thing is in state of flux, that stability is an illusion, and only change and law of change, or Logos, are real. In 'Perch', Heaney advocates the doctrine of Heraclitus:

> That is water, on carpets of Bann stream, on hold
> In the everything flows and steady go of the world.
>
> (ll 7-8, 'Perch', *EL*)

The poet's heart seems to be lightening up with hope for change. He desires to be harbinger of change at every front of society viz. political, social, religious. The weary world waits as the poet tries hard to frame a new vision to compensate for suffering through his poetry. The logos doctrine of Heraclitus, which identified the laws of nature with a divine mind, developed into the pantheistic theology of Stoicism*. A distinguish feature of Stoicism is cosmopolitanism which believes that all people are manifestations of one universal spirit. Thus, they should live in brotherly love and readily help one another. The ethnic differences, the social and political hierarchy hold no importance in

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* Heraclitus of Ephesus, a philosopher who flourished about 500 B.C. he belonged to a noble family. He set forth his system in a prose work (he was one of the earliest writers in Greek prose) which the ancients thought obscure. They called him 'the obscure one' in consequences. He rejected the views of Thales and his successors that there is a single permanent and imperishable substance behind the changes we see in the material world, and held that all things are in state of flux and the matter itself is constantly changing. He attributed to fire, an immaterial substance, the origin of all things. [28]

*The Stoic school of philosophy was founded at Athens c. 315 B.C. by Zeno of Citium in Cyprus. The school took its name from the fact that Zeno taught philosophy in *Stoa Poikile* at Athens. Zeno, in strong contrast to his contemporary Epicurus regarded the world as an organic whole, animated and directed by intelligence, and consisting of an active principle (God), and of that which is acted upon (matter); two inseparable aspect of reality. The universe, according to Stoic doctrine, at the end of each of a never-ending series of cycles, is absorbed into the divine fire, and then starts on a fresh course exactly reproducing its predecessor. In ethics Zeno held that the true end of man is an active life in harmony with nature, that is to say a life of virtue, for virtue is the law of the universe, God's will; and right conduct produces happiness. A notable Stoic doctrine was that of universal brotherhood of man, without distinction between Greek and barbarian, freeman and slave, and of the consequent duty of universal benevolence and justice. [29]

the social relations. Before the advent of Christianity, Stoics recognized and advocated the universal brotherhood and equality of all human beings. Heaney is deeply touched by this philanthropism. He, too, advocates the need of worldwide brotherhood, justice and universal benevolence. As a poet, he always attempts to relieve the quandary and plight of different marginalized sections-the colonized, the deprived children, and the physically challenged.

He publicized sympathy and love for them through his poetry. In 'THE CATECHISM' from 'Ten Glosses', he promotes harmonious existence of all human beings.

> Q. and A. come back. They "formed my mind."
> "Who is my neighbour?" "My neighbour is all mankind"
>
> (ll 1-2, 'THE CATECHISM', *EL*)

The poem is based on one of the Ten Commandments from Holy Bible 'Love thy neighbour'. With the world compressing into a global village, Heaney's nationalism metamorphoses into the citizenship of the world. The walls of religious, ethnic and racial differences are responsible for the division of the world. Heaney's poetry is a plea against all such dividing factors. He, like a true Christian, advocates the breaking of each and every such boundary and invites all mankind to live like neighbours. The Nobel Laureate, with such humanitarian concerns elevates himself to a pedestal where he undoubtedly, can be admired as the 'World's Poet'.

Heaney's endeavour for the harmony and universal camaraderie continues in the poem 'The Border Campaign', which he dedicates to his literary associate, the Nobel Laureate1991, Nadine Gordimer, the South African novelist and short story writer. Heaney admires the efforts of Gordimer in South Africa. The works of Gordimer reflect the sense of frustration with the socio-political predicament of racially divided South Africa. Her novels such as *A World of Strangers* (1958), *Occasion for Living* (1963), *The Late Bourgeois World* (1966) and *The Conversationalist* (1974) address the theme of tensions between white and non-white people forced to live under racial segregation,

apartheid, formerly in effect in South Africa. Heaney takes up the theme of living in a divided country. In the poem, he recollects his college days at St. Columb's College in London Derry.

> ... When I heard the word "attack
> In St. Columb's College in nineteen fifty-six
> It left me winded, left nothing between me
> And the sky that moved beyond my border's dormer
> The way it would have moved the morning after
> Savagery in Heorot, its reflection placid
> In those waterlogged huge pawmarks Grendel left
> On the boreen to the marsh.
>
> (ll 4-11, 'The Border Campaign', *EL*)

The violence of 1956 series of bombing raids on military supply depots and barracks occurred, seemingly carried out by IRA, from across the border in Eire. In consequence, the right to arrest and intern suspects without trial was given to the military forces. Heaney draws an analogue between the violence of his contemporary days with the 'Savagery in Heorot' by the monster Grendel in the Anglo-Saxon epic *Beowulf.* Heaney translated *Beowulf* into English in 2000. Conor McCarthy regards *Beowulf* as a 'text which has been used by various Old English Scholars to further claims of cultural and linguistic superiority, particularly in discussions concerned with issues of national origin and justification of colonialism'[30]. In the introduction to his translation, Heaney argues about his use of 'Irish culture' within the context of an 'English' poem as an opportunity to voice some of the historical injustices that can compensate for the marginalization of Ireland by England. He writes 'putting a bawn into Beowulf seems one way for an Irish poet to come to terms with the complex history of conquest and colony, absorption and resistance, integrity and antagonism, a history that has to be clearly acknowledged by all concerned in order to render it ever more 'willable forward / again and again and again'[31]. This is Heaney's strategy of dismantling the hegemony. Heaney, comments on his anti-colonial agenda:

> ... every time I read the lovely interlude that tells of the minstrel singing in Heorot just before the first attack of Grendel, I can not help thinking of

> Edmund Spenser in Kilcolman Castle, reading the early cantos of The Fairie Queen to Sir Walter Raleigh,just before the Irish would burn the castle and drive Spencer out of Munster back to Elizabethan court.[32]

The intertextuality not only provides an opportunity to raise the voice of Irish decolonization but it also constructs a platform where he can bring the agony of his people within the sanctified ground of a classic Anglo-Saxon epic. By dedicating the poem to Gordimer it seems that Heaney, too, wishes to control vices in his country. The intertextuality continues in 'On His Work in the English Tongue', a poem written in the remembrance of the British poet and author Ted Hughes who served as poet laureate from 1984 to 1998. In Britain, the poet laureate is named by the monarch as a member of the imperial household and is charged with the preparation of suitable verses for court and state occasions. In *Seeing Things*, Heaney dedicated 'Casting and Gathering' to Hughes. Heaney welcomed the poet laureateship of Ted Hughes:

> [Britain] should turn to a poet with essentially religious vision....with a strong trust in the pre-industrial realities of natural world, is remarkable. In fact, it is a vivid demonstration of the truth of the implied message of Hughes's poetry that the instinctual, intuitive side of man's, and in particular the Englishman's, nature has been starved and occluded and is in need of refreshment.[33]

The influence of Hughes on Heaney can be traced in the early anthologies like *Death of a Naturalist* and *Door into the Dark*. Heaney acknowledged 'I'm different kind of animal from Ted, but I will always be grateful for the release that reading his work gave me'[34]. However the Hughesian influence is blurred in the later anthologies and replaced by a need to explore the roots of conflict in Ireland. For Heaney, Hughes was a like a torchbearer at the onset of his poetic career but he, being poet laureate, reminds Heaney of the subjugation of the Irish culture. Tom Pauline analyzes the relations between Ireland and England as 'a story of possession and dispossession, territorial struggle and establishment or imposition of culture'[35]. Heaney combats this consciousness by giving a vernacular aspect to the Anglo Saxon epic. It can be categorized as a literary compensation:

Passive suffering: who said it was disallowed
As a theme for poetry? Already in *Beowulf*
The dumbfounding of woe, the stunt and stress
Of hurt-in-hiding is the best of it.

(ll 1-4, 'On His Work in the English Tongue, 3', *EL*)

Heaney continues:

And the poet draws from his word-hoard a weird tale
Of a life and love balked, which I reword here

(ll 10-11, 'On His Work in the English Tongue, 3', *EL*)

Heaney makes 'Passive suffering' the major theme of his poetry. He moulds the 'weird tale' into a new postcolonial frame work and becomes 'reinventor of the poem, [one] who turns Old English into Modern English to remake the literary and cultural history of the British Isles'[36]. The influence of European poets on Heaney can be seen in the prose which he wrote in nineteen-eighties. Czeslaw Milosz, Osip Mandelstam, Joseph Brodsky and Zbiginew Herbert appear in his prose and in this anthology. In the concluding stanza he remembers Milosz's saying:

Soul has its scruples. Things not to be said.
Things for keeping, that can keep the small hours gaze
Open and steady. Things for the *aye* of God
And for poetry. Which is, as Milosz says,
"A dividend from ourselves," a tribute paid
By what we have been true to. A thing allowed.

(ll 1-6, 'On His Work in the English Tongue, 5', *EL*)

The Nobel Laureate Czeslaw Milosz (1911-2004) was a Polish poet, essayist, novelist and translator. His work concentrates on the impact of historical circumstances on human morality. In nineteen thirty-nine when Germany invaded Poland, Milosz joined the underground movement of resistance to Nazi occupation and edited an anthology of anti-Nazi poetry *Piesnniepodlegla* (Invincible Songs, 1942). After the war was over he worked as a cultural ambassador at the Polish embassies in Paris and Washington D.C. During the ten year span in France, Milosz wrote *Znewolony umysl* (The Captive Mind,

1953), a much-admired political essay about the effects of the World War II on the values of imaginary writers who were forced to rationalize Stalinism. Milosz also translated the works of Shakespeare, Eliot and Milton into Polish.

The literary relationship which Heaney shares with Milosz is based on the idea of poetry as compensation for the socio-historical reality. Heaney shares the poetics of responsibility with the Polish poet who himself enquires about the significance of 'poetry which does not save / Nation or people'. Milosz answers that 'gentle verses written in the midst of horror declare themselves for life.'[37] Like the Polish poet, he desires to write poetry which 'is strong enough to help'[38]society.

In 'Audenesque', Heaney adapts four-beat quatrain of Auden's elegy for Yeats:

> Joseph, yes, you know the beat.
> Wystan Auden's metric feet
> Marched to it, unstressed and stressed,
> Laying William Yeats to rest.
>
> Its measured ways I tread again
> Quatrain by constrained quatrain,
> Meting grief and reason out
> As you said a poem ought.
>
> (ll 1-4, 9-12, 'Audensque', *EL*)

The elegy commemorates Joseph Brodsky (1940-1996), Russian born American poet, who served eighteen months in a Soviet labour camp for the charge of social parasitism, and was later exiled. He migrated to America and published numerous collections of his works. He was awarded the Nobel Prize in literature in 1987 and was named as U.S poet laureate in 1991. A major collection of his poetry, *Selected Poems*, was published in English translation in 1973, followed by *A Part of Speech* in nineteen eighty, *History of Twentieth Century* in 1986 and *To Urania* in 1988. Brodsky, in his essay 'To Please a Shadow' (1983), declared Auden as a poet whose 'sentiments inevitable subordinate themselves to the linear and recoiling progression of art'[39]. Heaney

shares the dilemma of exile and political consciousness with that of Brodsky. In the concluding lines his advice to Brodsky is:

> Do again what Auden said
> Good poets do: bite, break their bread.
>
> (ll 67-68, 'Audensque', *EL*)

Heaney translated *Beowulf* and *Sweeney Astray* into English. The influence of translations is recurrent in Heaney's oeuvres. Zbigniew Herbert (1924-1998) is a Polish poet and essayist whose works have a profound impact on Heaney. His works are unconventional and ironic. In 1950 he published the collection *Struna swiatla* (Chord of Light), followed by *Hermes, pies i gwiazda* (Hermes, a Dog and a Star, 1957) and *Studium przedmiotu* (A Study of the Object, 1961). Heaney comments that Herbert's poetry is 'in the exactions of its logic, the temperance of its tone, and extremity and equanimity of its recognitions'[40]. He suggests that Herbert renounced 'poetry as a self-indulging ornament'. In the poem 'To the Shade of Zbigniew Herbert', he addresses him as a poet whom 'Apollo favoured'. Heaney says that for the Polish, Herbert was Apollo's reincarnated. In Greek mythology, Apollo was the son of Zeus and Leto. He is the god of medicine, music, archery, and prophecy.

> You were one of those from the back of the north wind
> Whom Apollo favoured and would keep going back to
> In the winter season. And among your people you
> Remained his herald whenever he'd departed
> And the land was silent and summer's promise thwarted.
> You learnt the lyre from him and kept it tuned.
>
> (ll 1-6, 'To the Shade of Zbigniew Herbert', *EL*)

Heaney presents his oeuvres as memoirs and biographies. The poet he alludes to, analyzes or intertextualizes becomes a part of his poetic conscious. He sees his relationship with the literary family as a form of fascination. In an interview with Rand Brandes, he confessed 'The only way I can write about any conviction is out of love. Not necessarily from my long immersion in the poet, but the poet's immersion in me'[41]. In

the poem '"Would They Had Stayed"', the allusions are made to Scottish writers such as George Mackay Brown and Sorley Maclean. The other figures are Norman MacCaig and Iain MacGabhainn. The title of the poem echoes Heaney's desire for a reunion with his literary family. The poets invoked in the dedications and elegies are mostly the poets of the new world. Heaney can be associated with each one of them in their themes, their visions and their struggles against marginalization. The emerging literature of the postcolonial world encompasses literatures from across the globe. The English literary canon is being broadened not only by the native writers but also by those from Eastern Europe, South Africa, Indian subcontinent; Ireland and the Caribbean.

Heaney seems to be aware of the cultural diversity of globalization. Thus, in accordance to the demands of the new world, he acknowledges the contributions of non-native writers from the smaller and often unacknowledged, countries. Populating the English literary canon with writers from other countries excluding the British Isles, Heaney deploys a postcolonial tactic of softening the supremacy of the English literature written by the native. The glowing tribute to the writers of the new world, to some extent, compensates for the age-old marginalization of non-native literatures. The issue of literary reception is a significant debate of the postcolonial world. Steiner's remarked:

> The new status of Eastern Europe has occasioned a veritable tide of translation both into English and into the relevant languages. Czech, Polish, Hungarian, and Romanion literature are beginning to reach the Anglo-American world-audience. In turn, Western texts, long forbidden, are being imported.....Anglo-American masters, notably among the poets, are themselves turning more and more to translation. It is as if the planetary dominion of their privileged world-speech entails growing responsibilities.[42]

Along with Herculiean wisdom that every thing is in flux, Heaney holds memories to be stable. In the poems of remembrance Heaney recollects and elegizes friends and contemporaries who played Shakespearean roles at school in 'The Real Names'. The poem is dedicated to the Irish playwright and short story writer Brian Friel (b. 1929). He is best known for addressing Irish themes. His work encapsulates rural magic, violence, republicanism and politics, the influence of colonizer's culture of Ireland and the colonial

divisions between Ireland and Northern Ireland. Friel has translated, adopted and adapted a number of works by other authors such as Russian writers Anton Chekhov and Ivan Turgenev. He is also one of the founding members of Field Day group of Irish writers which includes Heaney.

The poem freezes the childhood moments which the poet 'won't forget'. He fondly remembers the enactment of Shakespeare's play by the juvenile and local school-artists.

> He dumped down at the opening of the scene
> Raised a stour off the boards, his turnip fists
> Swung low out of his ripped tarpaulin smock.
> I won't forget his Sperrins Caliban,
> His bag-aproned, potato-gatherer's Shakespeare:
> *And I with my long nails will dig thee pig-nuts.*
>
> (ll 6-11, 'The Real Names', *EL*)

The Irish juvenile adaptation of the play creates a mature colonial consciousness in the poet. The universally celebrated Shakespeare is localized as the 'potato-gatherer's Shakespeare'. Heaney has always associated potatoes with the Irish identity. He has described his ancestors as potato-gatherers and as people who dig with the spade. Heaney, too, digs into history and literature, but with his pen. The evocation of Caliban and Prospero hint towards the relationship which the Irish and English shared. Shakespeare's *Tempest* introduces Caliban as a savage and deformed slave who is neither man nor animal. He has to be taught language. In postcolonial criticism, Caliban has become central to the discourse of colonialism and as a cosmopolitan voice of anti-colonialism. This notion is shared by the colonies across the world. The colonizers under their pseudo-noble mission treated the natives as barbarians who had to be civilized. Derek Walcott voices similar sentiments:

> Their admirable wish to honour the degraded ancestor limits their language to phonetic plain, the groan of suffering, the curse of revenge. The tone of the past becomes unbearable burden, for they must abuse the master or hero in his own language, and this implies self-deceit. Their view of Caliban is of the enraged pupil. They cannot separate the rage of

> Caliban from the beauty of his speech when the speeches of Caliban are equal in their elemental power to those of his tutor. The language of the torturer mastered by the victim. This is viewed as servitude, not as victory.[43]

Heaney, as a postcolonial Caliban, writes to decolonize. This is a compensatory mission. In the poem, Heaney thinks of Shakespeare, the literary creator of Caliban:

> Shakespeare's father (or so John Aubrey claims)
> Was a butcher, and when Shakespeare was a boy
> "He exercised his father's trade, but when
> He kill'd a Calfe, he would doe it in *high style*
> & make a speech."
>
> (ll 49-53, 'The Real Names', *EL*)

Heaney recalls his imitation of Shakespeare.

> Managing to stand up unsupported
> On the deck-tilt of hot zinc: I'm on a roof
> That overlooks forever, with a pretend
> Gully knife of my own in one raised hand,
> Sawing air with the other
> (Call it a stage
> That everyone goes through ahead of time).
>
> Cows snuffle at feed buckets in the byre
> The stall-chain
> Call it a home from home.
>
> (ll 57-66, 'The Real Names', *EL*)

The portrayal of Shakespeare's father as a 'butcher' and of the young Shakespeare pursuing the same trade is ironic. The cow, traditionally, has been associated with the peaceful rural world. The Irish native has been compared to the peaceful bucolic animal. The contrasting images of Heaney's ancestors rearing animals and ploughing fields of Shakespeare's father slaughtering cows indicate the differences between the two poets. Heaney's representation of Shakespeare's childhood can be described as colonial mimicry. Homi Bhabha refers to such situations as 'ironic compromise'. Shakespeare as

the mouthpiece of the Empire misrepresented the Irish in his plays. Heaney writes back by representing him as a 'butcher'.

In a world where everything is in state of flux, Heaney believes memories are stable. In 'Montana' Heaney remembers 'John Dologhan, the best milker ever'. Heaney, as a five years old child, developed a kind of 'recognition' with John Dologhan which at that time 'made no sense'. However, a later visit to the stable triggers memories which he treasures in his poetry. Heaney has always related himself to the common people. Memories for Heaney are the healing faculty of fixities which compensate for the flux of the world. 'The Loose Box', too, starts with an abandoned stable. Heaney is again 'Back at the dark end' where 'a deep-littered silence' pervades. The poem recalls 'an old recording' of the Irish poet and novelist, Patrick Kavanagh:

> That there's health and worth in any talk about
> The properties of land. Sandy, glarry,
> Mossy, heavy, cold, the actual soil
>
> (ll 27-29, 'The Loose Box', *EL*)

Patrick Kavanagh (1904-1967) is best acknowledged for his volume *The Great Hunger* (1942) which recounts the depravation of the Irish land-tillers and the frustration of their families. Heaney's poem captures a series of images. It opens with the birth of Jesus Christ a stable, and makes a reference to Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* while exploring the theme of cultural clash between industrialization of the cities and diminishing quality of rural life, then moves to the Trojan horse and finally to the death of Irish patriot Michael Collins (1890-1922) in the civil war. The fragmented images deal with religion, literature and nationalism. The poem commences with the birth of Christ, the savior of humanity and concludes with the death of Michael Collins who tried to save Ireland. The linking factor is the stable and the straw. Christ is born on a bed of straw; Trojan horse is filled with straw and the death of Collins occurs in the stable, on the straw. The abandoned stable reminds Heaney of the colonial history of Ireland where a visionary was killed on straw. Christ was born on straw and in his attempt to rescue

mankind was crucified. In the same way, Collins was killed on 'hay-floor' in his endeavour to save his community:

> Has nothing to hold on to and falls again
> Willingly, lastly, foreknowledgeably deep
> Into the hay-floor that gave once in his childhood
> Down through the bedded mouth of the loft trapdoor,
> The loosening fodder-chute, the aftermath...
>
> (ll 58-62, 'The Loose Box', *EL*)

The childhood belief that the family doctor Kerlin brought babies in his big, black bag is described in the poem 'Out of the bag'. The child entertains the illusion that the doctor made the baby by magically putting together 'infant parts' with his surgical instruments such as 'steel hooks and chrome surgery tools'. After the birth of the baby, his mother would ask him:

> "And what do you think
> Of the new wee baby the doctor brought for us all
> When I was asleep?"
>
> (ll 13-15, 'Out of the Bag IV, *EL*)

As an adult, Heaney writes:

> The room I came from and the rest of us all came from
> Stays pure reality where I stand alone,...
>
> (ll 1-2, 'Out of the Bag IV, *EL*)

Pre-mature knowledge of reproduction was considered unsuitable for children. Parents created symbolic stories to satisfy the curiosities of young children. The poet links the narratives of his mother to the healing power of poetry:

> *Poeta doctus* Peter Levi says
> Sanctuaries of Asclepius (called *asclepions*)
> Were the equivalent of hospitals
>
> In the ancient Greece. Or of shrines like Lourdes,

Says *poeta doctus* Graves. Or of the cure
By poetry that cannot be coerced,

Say I, who realized at Epidaurus
That the whole place was a sanatorium
With theatre and gymnasium and baths,

A site of incubation, where "incubation"
Was technical and ritual, meaning sleep
When epiphany occurred and you met the god...

(ll 1-12, 'Out of the Bag II, *EL*)

Heaney's epiphany is based on the relationship between the creation of a baby and the writing of poetry. God creates the baby and poet creates poetry. The realization comes at Epidaurus*, the site of temple dedicated to Asclepius**. In ancient Greece, the patients were cured at the temple. For Heaney, 'the whole place was a sanatorium' where he could get rid of ignorance. The curing power of poetry is equated with the ancient mythical cure center and the pilgrimage to Lourdes in south western France where in 1858; St. Bernadette claimed to have a vision of the Virgin Mary. The waters of an underground spring in the grotto are believed to have miraculous healing power. Heaney believes that poetry can cure ills, revitalize the decaying, and resurrect the dead and reform society.

The theme of poetic resurrection is central to the poem 'Sruth', which Heaney wrote in memory of Mary O Muirithe. She was not cured from her illness but has been immortalized in Heaney's verses. The poet visited her home after her death to honour her. The emotional bond prompted Heaney to do so. She died of 'cancer', the incurable

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* Epidaurus in Argolis, the chief seat of the worship of Asclepius. The sanctuary contained, besides the temple of Asclepius, a remarkable circular building supported by two circular colonnades, and a great outer colonnade where probably the patient slept. Here have been found inscriptions recording a number of cures effected in the sanctuary. About a quarter of mile from the sanctuary was the theatre, a very beautiful structure still to be seen in good preservation. [44]

** In Greek mythology, son of Apollo and god of medicine. Apollo loved Coronis, daughter of phlegyas, but she was unfaithful to him, and he slew her. Afterward he felt sorry, and turned the crow which ahd told him of of her infidelity from a white bird into a black. He saved the child of Coronis (Asclepius) and entrusted him to wise Centaur Chiron. From him Asclepius learnt the art of medicine. [45]

disease according to medical science. The poetic imagination now cures her and also revitalizes her. Heaney makes him 'Fit for what comes':

> Then asked me to visit:
> If anything happened
> Just to see and be sure
> And not to forget
> For your sake to do it.
>
> (ll 17-21, 'Sruth', *EL*)

Remembrance provides an emotional compensation for Heaney as well as for the friend who could not be saved by the doctors. The implication is that the power of poetry transcends all the cures in the world.

Heaney discusses the disintegration of Balkans in 1990s in the poem 'Known World'. Balkans peninsula encompasses the countries that are commonly known as Balkan state: Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Republic of Macedonia, Siberia and Montenegro, Albania, Greece and Bulgaria. Balkan's history is characterized by military and political strife as the peninsula is politically and economically important. In 1991 and 1992, four Yugoslav republics-Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Macedonia, declared their independence from Yugoslavia. This was followed by Serbia and Montenegro formation of new state- the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Heaney paints a gory picture of war in which concentration camps have mushroomed at every corner and people have been injured and made roofless:

> ...And now the refugees
> Come loaded on tractor mudguards and farm carts,
> On trailers, ruck-shifter, box-barrows, prams,
> On sticks, on crutches, on each other's shoulders,
>
> (ll 41-44, 'Known World, *EL*)

The atrocities of wars bring a sense of loss and the disheartened poet believes that nothing has changed in the so-called civilized world. The prehistoric barbarity continues to envelop the world in which man has been reduced to a civilized beast:

> The old sense of a tragedy going on
> Uncomprehended, at the very edge
> Of the usual, it never left me once...
>
> (ll 51-53, 'Known World, *EL*)

Nationalism has changed. The barbaric world is defined by the need to establish a single ethnic identity. Ironically the harmonious existence of a single identity demands the ethnic decontamination of the other community. 'Known world' portrays the horror of the ethic-cleansing of Bosnia and Herzegovina:

> The open door, the jambs, the worn saddle
> And actual granite of the doorstep slab.
> Now enter another angel, fit as ever,
> Past each house with a doorstep daubed "Serb house".
>
> (ll 69-72, 'Known World, *EL*)

Before the war, Bosnia had a concentrated ethnic population. The Muslim population was concentrated in the central and eastern Bosnia. Concentrations of Serbs were separate from those of Muslims. Croats were mainly concentrated on the northern and southwestern border with Croatia, with some Croats pockets in Central Bosnia. Serb military campaigns of 1992 and 1993 and Croats campaigns of 1993 and 1995 were aimed at ethnic cleansing of the 'others' form their areas. By the end of the war almost all non-Serbs had been expelled from Serb-claimed lands in eastern and northern Bosnia, and non-Croats from Croats-claimed lands in southwestern Bosnia. In turn, most non-Muslims had vacated the land under Muslim control in northwestern Bosnia. The war and its aftermath created homogenous zones. The return of the refugees was impossible.

Faced with the responsibility of addressing complex issues, the poet evaluates the healing role of poetry. The poet asks himself many questions:

Were we not made for summer, shade, and coolness
And gazing through an open door at sunlight?
For paradise lost? Is what I was taught?

(ll 48-50, 'Known World, *EL*)

Heaney is unnerved by the savagery which motivates people to kill each other only because their views, language, colour of skin and religion are different from the 'other'. The suggestion of enjoying the natural beauty serves as a compensation for the violent mood of the poem.

Heaney bedecks *Electric Light* with three eclogues- 'Bann Valley Eclogue', 'Virgil: Eclogue IX', and 'Glanmore Eclogue'. Eclogues are pastoral poems which are written in the form of dialogues or conversations. They are used as a means to contrast simple, unlettered shepherds with the corrupt urban populace. Eclogues are used as mouthpieces to utter moral and philosophical viewpoints. The form was explored by Italian Renaissance humanists such as Petrarch and Giovanni Boccaccio. In the history of English literary tradition, Edmund Spenser wrote *The Shepheardes Calendar* (1579) in 12 eclogues. The pastoral theme is taken up in works such as *The Sad Shepherd* (1641) by Ben Jonson, *Arcadia* by Sir Philip Sidney. William Shakespeare used the pastoral convention in *As You Like It* (1600). Pastoral elegy, one of the forms of eclogue, has inspired writers of elegies. e.g. 'Lycidas' by Milton, *Adonais* (1821) by P.B Shelley and *Thyrsis* (1866) by Arnold.

The pastoral offers an alternative to the culture of wars. In Heaney's metaphysics it seems to compensate for the atrocities of war by investing violence and stalemates with future possibilities of reconciliations and hopes of integration.

Heaney's 'Bann Valley Eclogue' is loosely structured upon Virgil's *Eclogue IV*. In 37 B.C, Virgil completed his first major work *Eclogues*, which contained pastoral poems modeled on the *Idyll* of Alexandrian poet Theocritus. Virgil's Eclogue shows nationalistic consciousness with the introduction of real characters and events in the poem. The fourth Eclogue celebrates the birth of a child who is destined to usher a new

age of peace and prosperity. This tale might have reference to the expected child of Mark Antony and Octavia and symbolically may refer to the dawning of a new age. During the Roman Age and Middle Ages, the poem was regarded as a prophesy of birth of Jesus Christ.

Virgil's fourth *Eclogue* offers a vision of peace. In 'Bann Valley Eclogue', Virgil appears before the poet. The poet aware of the influence of Virgil's *Eclogue* on his people, asks him to provide inspiration. Adhering to the pastoral tradition of a pastoral poem, Heaney begins with an invocation to Muses:

> Bann Valley Muses, give us a song worth singing,
> Something that rises like the curtain in
> Those words *And it came to pass or In the beginning.*
> Help me to please my hedge-school master Virgil
>
> (ll 1-4,'Bann Valley Eclogue', *EL*)

Heaney's use of *Eclogue* evolved from the same state of mind as Virgil. Virgil wrote *Eclogue* in the midst of civil wars. The exhaustion and the demand of a peaceful compensation unite Virgil and Heaney. Virgil appears and assigns to Heaney the task of writing for the nation:

> *Carmen, ordo, nascitur, saeculum,gens.*
> Their gist in your tongue and provience should be clear
> Even at this stage. Poetry, order, the times,
> The nation, wrong and renewal, then an infant birth
> And flooding away of all the old miasma.
> ...
> ...But when the waters break
> Bann's stream will overflow, the old markings
> Will avail no more to keep east bank from west.
> The valley will be washed like the new baby.
>
> (ll 8-12 &15-18 ,'Bann Valley Eclogue', *EL*)

Heaney quotes '*Carmen, ordo, nascitur, saeculum,gens*' form Virgil's *Eclogue* which heralds the unambiguous onset of a new era. The negotiations of poetry are helpful

in proposing compromises. Heaney's golden child will be the harbinger of a new reformed world where all the divisions will not exist as they would have already been washed away with the liberating water. Virgil prophesizes:

> Eclipses won't be for this child. The cool she'll know
> Will be the pram hood over her vestal head.
> Big dog daisies will get fanked up in the spokes.
> She'll lie on summer evenings listening to
> A chug and slug going on in the milking parlour.
> Let her never hear close gunfire or explosion.
>
> (ll 25-30,'Bann Valley Eclogue', *EL*)

The expected child in Virgil's Eclogue is a boy. Heaney however advocates birth of a girl. Heaney is aware of the gender bias against the girl child. In the modern world the preference for the male-child is still prevalent. As a result the world is still under the eclipse of female foeticide. With the coming of new era Heaney hopes 'Eclipses won't be there for this child'. Heaney shows a concern for the marginalization of girls and desires a secure future of girls. His reassurance is a redress against the gender politics still persistent in many parts of world. The possibilities of reconciliation are balanced with the anxiety of eclipse of 1991. Heaney offers a natural world where 'Cows are let out....sluicing the milk-house floor'. The natural world offers compensations for the war-torn world. It washes away the past problems and grief with its liberating stream. It paves the way to reconciliation, and directs a shaft of light towards compensations and consolations of a secure and healthy future symbolized by the girl-child. Heaney's stream of water transcends the boundaries of his national consciousness and decontaminates and quenches the thirst of whole humanity. In the hope of a secure future of the world, the poet compromises with the reality of the condition in which the people actually live. He takes compensatory refuge in his imaginative vision of a possible safe and sound future of mankind.

The complexity of healing the injuries inflicted by wars is evident in Heaney's translation of Virgil's ninth *Eclogue* in 'Virgil: Eclogue IX'. In the eclogue of political protest and complain, Heaney raises the issues of sufferings of the civilian. The poem

seems to be a renewed endeavour of initiating negotiations which Heaney feels would bring reconciliation. The poem represents a longing for shelter. Colonization and the territory wars of the world have resulted in dislocating original inhabitants. The Balkan wars for ethnic singularity resulted in ethnic cleansing and capturing of land owned by the dominant's 'other'. After Octavian's victory in the civil war Virgil was forcefully evicted from farm which was given to a demobilized soldier. The displacement from his own land inflicted a deep wound in Virgil's heart. This sense of displacement can be extended to the psyche of all the civilians and natives whose lands were confiscated during colonization and during civil wars. Moeris complains in the poem:

> An outsider lands and says he has the rights
> To our bit of ground. "Our, old hands," he says,
> "This place is mine." And all these kid-goats in the creel-
> Bad cess to him- these kids are his. All's changed.
>
> (ll 4-7,'Virgil: Eclogue IX', *EL*)

The confiscation is not confined to the physical level of capturing land and imprisoning natives. It includesthe potential of articulation which, too, is suppressed during colonization and wars as Lycidas confesses in the poem 'Shocking times. Our very music, our one consolation, / Confiscated, all but.' The marginalization and subjugation was prevalent at every front and the most sensitive and responsible public-voice, the poet, the, feels inadequate in combating the situation. The poet becomes helpless as a dove before an eagle:

> ...But songs and tunes
> Can no more hold out against the brute force than doves
> When eagle swoops.
>
> (ll 13-15,'Virgil: Eclogue IX', *EL*)

The simile of a dove before an eagle communicates the weakness of natives before the colonizers and of the civilians before the foreign soldiers. The pastoral poets write about pastures and the loss of their land renders them incapable of writing poetry. The act of writing compensates for the losses as exhibited in 'Singing shortens the road'. The

The eviction scene at the time of Irish Famine

In 1845 the potato crop in Ireland was struck by a disease and half the crop failed. The other agricultural products such as wheat and oats and the other resources such as beef, mutton, pork and poultry were taken and shipped out of the country by the British landowners for profit. The economic condition of the Irish peasant went from bad to worse in the years 1846 and 1847 leaving the people starving. The British Empire turned a deaf ear to the plight and refused to help the starving people and continued to ship the produce abroad. In the dreadful event many people migrated to other countries and more than one and a half million starved to death.

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desire to write earnest poetry is compromised with the understanding of their engagements. The hope to write again partially heals their wounds:

> That's enough of that, my boy. We've a job to do.
> When the real singer comes, we'll sing in earnest.
>
> (ll 82-83,'Virgil: Eclogue IX', *EL*)

Heaney has always associated Glanmore, an estate in Co. Wicklow in the Republic of Ireland, with peaceful and revitalizing strength. Glanmore has been referred to in the 'Glanmore Sonnets' in *Field Work* (1979) and 'Glanmore revisited' in *Seeing Things* (1991). Heaney's move from Belfast to Glanmore in 1972 was to renew the poetic imagination. The peaceful and pastoral vision of Glanmore was compensation against the brutalities of Troubles. The eclogue is in form of dialogue between Myles and the poet. Myles may refer to Myles na gCopaleen- the Irish name of Brain O' Nolan or the name may be a pun on Milesians, the mythological Spanish invaders of Ireland who invaded Ireland in 1300 B.C and became the ancestor of Gaelic Irish race. Peace has been established and captured in poetry. To renew inspiration which has somewhat decomposed because of wars, Myles says:

> A house and ground. And your own bay tree as well
> And time to yourself. You've landed on your feet.
> If you can't write now, when will you ever write?
>
> (ll 1-3,'Glanmore Eclogue', *EL*)

The poem suggests that peace does not always bring universal prosperity. Peace sometimes brings its own problems. Those problems are relative for the poet and the farmer. Myles describes the difficulty in coming to terms with the changing world:

> But now with all this money coming in
> And peace being talked up, the boot's on the other foot.
> .....
> Small farmers here are priced out of the market.
>
> (ll 20-21 &24,'Glanmore Eclogue', *EL*)

The local farmer wishes for financial security but the poet seems to be aware of his limitation. As a modest compromise, he offers a 'summer song' to the farmer. The song serves as temporary compensation and for a while reduces the insecurity of the farmer. The poet attempts to re-nurture his imagination. The eclogue is between the poet (Heaney's profession) and the farmer (Heaney's inheritance). In the eclogue, Heaney justifies his option to use the 'pen' rather than the 'spade' and his breaking up of the familial lineage as announced in his first anthology *Death of a Naturalist*.

The eclogues are different from the conventional pastoral poems as Frawley analyzes in the introduction to his work:

> Virgil and Theocritus' pastoral offered an idealization of a simple life in nature that implied a critique of their culture; Pastoral poems written under the ruler of a colonial government about nature and landscape are necessarily different, and contain as well become clear of culture lost under colonial rule, but also critiques of that rule itself. Colonial pastorals are quite literary about 'homesickness'; the nostalgia contained in them is very real indeed.[46]

Heaney's pastoral vision compensates for the savage realities of wars. It underscores a harsh, pragmatic nostalgia that demands decolonization rather than maudlin retreat.

Heaney recreates the lavishness of the natural world in 'Sonnets from Hellas'. The sonnets travel extensively in space and time, in the past and the present, journeying through the classical locations and revisiting the poet's childhood. The classical and the modern are woven together in the descriptions of place and time. Hellas or the land of Hellenes is often applied to ancient Greece, including the Greek islands and colonies. The name became common after the mass migrations of Hellenic people, beginning about 1100 B.C.

In the first sonnet "INTO ARCADIA", Heaney travel to Arcadia*, the rural utopia, where he finds 'opulence and amen on the mountain road'. Time and location hold no value in the place of perfect rural bliss. The farmer who once worked in Melbourne,

capital of Victoria, in southeastern Australia, is 'Known in Hellas, probably, since Hesiod-'. Hesiod was a Greek poet who lived in 8th century B.C. Heaney's Arcadia seems to be well connected by the modes of modern travel-communication.

> Into Arcadia, a lorry load
> Of apples had brust open the road
> So that for yards our tyres raunched and scrunched them
>
> (ll 8-10,'INTO ARCADIA', 'Sonnets from Hellas, *EL*)

Only poetic imagination can grant access to this kind of amalgamated rural-modern utopia. The imaginary rural utopia is modernized through Heaney's imagination. It hints towards Heaney's dream vision of modernizing his rural society. 'Pylos' is written in memoriam of the American poet Robert Fitzgerald who translated Homer into English. Pylos is a region in Greece. In the 'sandy Pylos' Heaney 'woke to the world like Telemachos' and he feels he is 'Young again in the whitewashed light of morning'. The poem is written as an acknowledgement of the literary achievement of Robert Fitzgerald who is 'translator of all Homer'. He wishes to acknowledge the high achievements:

> From myself to be more myself in the mast-bending
> Marine breeze, to key the understanding
> To that image of the bow strung as a lyre
>
> (ll 7-9,'PYLOS', 'Sonnets from Hellas, *EL*)

Heaney applauds the American poet for his translation of Homer which seems to have influenced Heaney in the translation of various classical works. Heaney has translated the classical works of Virgil and Dante into English; he has also translated *Beowulf* and Sophocles's *Antigone* (*The Burial at Thebes*) and *Philoctetes* (*The Cure at Troy*), *The Midnight Verdict* (from B. Merriman and Ovid),and *Buile Suibhne* (*Sweeney Astray*) into English. The classics occupy a significant in the literary world. Italo Cavino emphasized the significance and need of classics in 'Why Read the Classics':

> The classics are books that exert a peculiar influence, both when they refuse to be eradicated from the mind when they conceal themselves in the folds of memory, camouflaging themselves as collective or individual. [47]

Further, he viewed classics as a reflection of historical culture:

> The classic are books that comedown to us bearing the traces of reading previous to ours, and bringing in their wake the traces they themselves have left on the culture or cultures they passed through (or more simply, on language and custome).[48]

For Heaney, as a part of identity, both language and customs are important. In his attempts to dismantle the hegemony he uses language as a tool for the subjugation of customs and traditions of natives. The translations provide an opportunity to look back into the histories of ancient civilizations and he uses the platform to rehistorize his own circumstances. Heaney extends gratitude to Robert Fitzgerald.

Heaney uses his poetry as a site to acknowledge all his mentors. In 'Seeing the Sick', he wishes to express gratitude to his father who reminds him of 'Hopkins's Felix Randal'. Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1889) was an English poet whose works express an intense response to the natural world, and whose literary innovations have given a new lease of life to English lyrics. In 1884, Hopkins became a professor of Greek at University College, Dublin. However his stay at Ireland was miserable because of his ill heath and excessive workload. During his stay he produced a series of 'Terrible Sonnets', which reflect the conflict between his religious vocation and the attractions of the world.

Hopkins's 'Felix Randal' is an elegy to a dead blacksmith. After the death of Randal, the duty of the Hopkins also ends as the poet is left sans a subject. Hopkins writes in 'Felix Randal (ll 1-2).

> Felix Randal the farrier, O he is dead then? My duty
> all ended

Heaney remembers his father in a similar fashion but he claims that his loss and grief is much more as he shares an intimate filial blood relationship with his father. Heaney laments:

> Anointed and all, my father did remind me
> Of Hopkins's Felix Randal.
> And then he grew
> (As he would have said himself) "wee in his cloths"-
> Spectral, a relict-
> OAnd seemed to have grown so
>
> (ll 19-23,'Seeing the Sick', *EL*)

Heaney is reminded of Hopkins's 'Felix Randal' because of his association with the labour class. The title of the Heaney's poem comes from a line from Hopkins's 'Felix Randal (ll 13).

> This seeing the sick endears them to us, us too it endears.

Unlike Hopkins, Heaney's duty is not over with the death of his father. He is overwhelmed by continuous surges of memory:

> His smile a summer half-door opening out
> And opening in. a reprieving light.
> For which the tendered morphine had our thanks.
>
> (ll 19-21,'Seeing the Sick', *EL*)

Father's smile, connected to multi-hued memories, was like 'a reprieving light'. Heaney travels down memory lane and recollects mistakes and fears of rebuke. However, his father always smiled. The smile came across like 'tendered morphine'. Heaney wishes to thank his father for being gentle and caring. Heaney has evoked the figure of his father in several poems such as 'Follower' and 'Digging' (*Death of a Naturalist*), and 'The Stone Verdict' (*The Haw Lantern*). In these poems the evocation was for establishing rural identity and exposing the impact of colonialism. The reminiscence in 'Seeing the Sick' seems to emerge from the desire to acknowledge the filial bond.

The concluding poem of the anthology is the title poem 'Electric Light'. Following the division of Ireland with the declaration of Republic of Ireland on Easter Monday, 18th April, 1949, the mass migration to cities and to other countries started. People migrated to the United States of America and to the United Kingdom in search for better job opportunities. In an attempt to assist the farming population, and to curtail the mass migration of farm workers to the cities and other countries, electrification of rural Ireland was started. This exercise promoted the establishment of local small scale industries.

In the poem Heaney remembers his childhood visit to an old woman's house. Heaney does not identify her. Heaney begins the poem with the description of 'Candle-grease congealed, dark-streaked with wick-soot...'which symbolizes the pre-electrification alternatives for light. The woman was 'old' and electrification was new. The implication is that earlier she had spent many dark nights and uncomfortable days without the electricity. Now, with the introduction of light 'She sat with her fur-lined slippers unzipped'. The old woman introduced Heaney to the new inventions of electric light and radio.

> In the first house where I saw electric light
>
> (ll 5,'Electric Light', *EL*)

> A turn of their wireless knob and light came on
> In the dial. They let me and they watched me
> As I roamed at will the stations of the world.
>
> (ll 31-33,'Electric Light', *EL*)

The new scientific inventions were a source of comfort as well as a medium of contact with the outer world. In the Nobel lecture, at Stockholm, Heaney fondly remembered his childhood routine of listening to radio:

> When a wind stirred in the beeches, it also stirred an aerial wire attached to the topmost branch of the chestnut tree. Down it swept, in through a hole bored in the corner of the kitchen window, right on into the innards of our wireless set where a little pandemonium of burbles and squeaks would suddenly give way to the voice of a BBC newsreader

> speaking out of the unexpected like a *dues ex machina.* And that voice too we could hear in our bedroom...[49]

Another scientific invention that Heaney describes in the poem is 'transport of a morning train'. With the invention and introduction of railways distance decreased. The poem explores the space between old and modern. Scientific inventions connected the world through the air waves and railway tracks but are unable to help the old woman in getting rid of 'Her helplessness'. The old woman and the poet are 'both desperate'. Heaney sympathizes with her. Heaney suggests that these inventions have made life easy and comfortable but they cannot comfort the old woman or the poet:

> The night I was left to stay, when I wept and wept
> Under the clothes...
>
> (ll 10-11,'Electric Light', *EL*)

Heaney begins the anthology with 'At Toomebridge' where he writes about 'negative ions', the elemental force behind the production of electric current and concludes the anthology with 'Electric Light' suggesting a definite poetic strategy and the significance of poetic power.

District and Circle (2006)

From the outset of his poetic career, since the publication of *Death of a Naturalist* (1966), Heaney's poetry has been deeply rooted in the familiar geographical and chronological 'district' of his imagination. In the most recent anthology *District and Circle* (2006), Heaney self-consciously returns and circles around his *au fait* 'district' of his childhood. In the previous collections, his vision was predominantly confined to Northern and Mediterranean Europe. In *District and Circle*, he goes global. His visionary terrain expands to scrutinize the contemporary world, shadowed by war, sans peace, harbouring the horror of violence. John Burnside claims:

> ...at first sight *District and Circle* is a compendium of many of Heaney's singular preoccupations- Anahorish, the Tollund Man and Glanmore, are

> all evoked, as the familiar ghosts of World War and Edward Thomas-this collection aims, not so much at consolidation of a great artist's vision, but at a further enrichment, via further interrogation, of that artist's sense of his own source, and of his tradition.[51]

The anthology returns to time 'In age of bare hands / and cast iron' (The Turnip-Snedder) to the contemporary menaced world where 'Anything can happen, the tallest towers / Be overturned' (Anything Can Happen). In the oscillations, there are remembrances- of poets such as Pablo Neruda, Auden, and Milosz, recollections of American presence in Ireland during World War II and the memorial-register of friends, family, authors and acquaintances.

In the first poem 'THE TURNIP-SNEDDER', the poet recollects the 'age of bare hands' where the snedder, a pre-modern manual machine for mashing turnips for animal feed, was used for in Ireland. Apart from cultivation, raising livestock is a major rural activity in Ireland. Prior to the modernization of agriculture, the snedders were common. Heaney, in a nostalgic vein, returns to the days of slow, laborious farm work:.

> as the handle turned
> and turnip-heads were let fall and fed
> to the juiced-up inner blades,
> "This is the turnip-cycle,"
>
> as it dropped its raw sliced mess,
> bucketful and glistering bucketful.
>
> (ll 15-20, 'The Turnip-Snedder', *DC*)

The 'turnip-cycle' produced 'bucketful' of the 'raw sliced mess' meant to be used as fodder. 'Bucketful' represents the typical country measure. Seen from this angle, the revisions and circlings resurrect a bygone world. The poem celebrates the contentment of bucolic life. The childhood recollections belong to a poet who is now growing old. This creates a conflict. The adult vision is laden with the awareness of the present predicament of the world. The machine chops, 'the clamp-on meat-mincer' which is 'standing guard / on four braced greaves' with its 'inner blades' drops 'raw sliced mess' suggesting

massacre and genocide. The poem is written amidst contemporary wars. Heaney is unable to save his poetry from the interference of war imagery. He has to compromise poetically with the raw material revitalized from the damaged world.

The intrusion of the adult scrutinical vision into the childhood recollections continues in the poem 'A Shiver'. A poem about sledge-hammering, it captures the reactions of child watching a man beating iron with his sledgehammer in his workshop:

> The way you had to stand to swing the sledge,
> Your two knees locked, your lower back shock-fast
> As shields in a *testudo*
>
> (ll 1-3, 'A Shiver', *DC*)

The wielding man supports his 'lower back' like 'shield in testudo'. 'Testudo' is a mobile siege shelter used by soldiers to save them from missiles. The rural activity is compared with military activity. In 'Polish Sleeper', the poet remembers 'Listening for the goods from Castledawson' and 'languid, clanking waggon'. The poem indirectly touches upon the genocides and massacre of Jews by Nazis in World War II holocaust. The leadership of Germany's Nazi Party ordered the genocide of 5.6 millions to 5.9 millions Jews in Europe. In the worst genocides of human history, along with the Jews and Russian soldiers, Nazis also massacred and imprisoned the Germans who were ideologically against them, the gays and physically and mentally unsound people. For centuries the Christians in Europe were against Jews. The political, ethical and religious hatred under the broad policy of anti-semitism was the immediate cause for the holocaust. After the outbreak of World War II in September 1939, the Nazis in their quest for the final solution to the European Jewish population problems, proposed the establishment of southeastern Poland confinements to which Jews would be deported. The second proposal was the deportation of Jews to the island of Madagascar. These proposals were, however, not adopted but the preliminary steps were already taken for the future deportations to concentration camps. As a consequence, Jews in Poland were forced to move into ghettos where they lived in appalling conditions. From Norway to North

Africa all Jews lost their rights and property. Heaney remembers the cleansing and deportation of Jews:

> Once they'd been block-built criss-cross and four-squared
> We lived with them and breathed pure creosote
> Until they were laid and landscaped in kerb,
>
> (ll 1-3, 'Polish Sleepers', *DC*)

Ireland declared neutrality during the World War II but a silent anti-semitism existed in the religiously conscious Ireland which discouraged the immigration of thousands of Jews. Europe was 'washed' of its Jewish population leaving 'no stain'. Phrases like 'creosote', 'bleached', 'washed', 'parched' refer to the process of cleaning and distillation referring to the forced amputation in Europe. Earlier, in previous anthologies, Heaney captured the tensions of wars but in *District and Circle*, his vision is for all humanity. 'Anahorish 1944' can be cited as an example. The poem is about the presence of American soldiers in Ireland during World War II:

> "We were killing pigs when the Americans arrived.
> A Tuesday morning, sunlight and gutter-blood
> Outside the slaughterhouse. From the main road
> They would have heard the squealing,
> Then heard it stop and had a view of us
> In our gloves and aprons coming down the hill.
> Two lines of them, guns on their shoulders, marching.
> Armoured cars and tanks and open jeeps.
> Sunburnt hands and arms. Unknown, unnamed.
> Hosting for Normandy.
> Not that we knew then
> Where they headed, standing there like youngsters
> As they tossed us gums and tubes of coloured sweets."
>
> (ll 1-13, 'Anahorish 1944', *DC*)

The poem is a recollection of a perfectly normal day in 1944. The rural people could not immediately perceive the turning point. The Allied assault on Nazi-occupied northern Europe gathered the largest force in the history of warfare. The oppositional

Allied forces consisted of 20 U.S divisions, 14 British divisions, 3 Canadian divisions, a French and a Polish division. On the first day of D-Day invasion, 6th June 1944, about 120,000 Allied troops landed at five beach locations along the coast of the French province of Normandy after crossing the English Channel from bases in south England. The poem captures the passing of 'Unknown, unnamed' soldiers to Normandy.

The neutrality policy of Ireland received both criticism and pressure from Britain. In order to safeguard the lives of American soldiers in Northern Ireland Britain suspended any kind of travel between Britain and in any part of Ireland. Bans were imposed on the telephone and telegraph services, and it was extended to the ban on print media to enhance security. The poem is a recollection of Ireland in 1944 when Heaney was a small child. The poet returns to the moments almost after 62 years, and finds the poignancy still there. The world has not changed. The recent example is of that of the American invasion of Afghanistan after 9/11. The poem draws parallels with recent wars. It hints at the American peace war in Afghanistan. Thus, an analogous can be drawn with the Irish people standing in their farms and watching silently the 'unnamed, unknown American soldiers and Afghani farmers standing in their opium farms and silently watching the anonymous American soldiers.

The military forces have always been associated with war and violence but Heaney's soldiers have 'gums and tubes of coloured sweets' along with 'guns on their shoulders'. He presents a humanistic image of soldiers as they toss the gums and sweets to Irish children. Heaney's presentation recollects the 'chocolate cream soldier' of the Irish playwright G.B Shaw's play *Arms and the Man* (1898). Shaw's play was unique in breaking the myth of chivalry and romanticism which was traditionally associated with wars and soldiers. Heaney is sensitive to the psyche of the soldiers. By painting the soldier's in humanitarian hues, Heaney compensates for the brutal and horrific stereotyping. Heaney comprehends that soldiers are first human beings and later the dispensers of inhuman orders. Heaney talks about the life of a superannuated solider, who was given the job of a 'stretcher-bearer' in the poem 'To Mick Joyce in Heaven'.

Heaney's demobbed soldier 'was never a killer' instead he helped the injured. After retirement, the life changed for him:

> Kit-bag to tool bag,
> Warshirt to workshirt-
> Out of your element
> Among farmer in-laws,
>
> (ll 1-4, 'To Mick Joyce in Heaven', *DC*)

The retired soldier was a healer. During the war he bandaged wounds and carried bedpans for the sick. Life changed but with his humanitarian concerns, he opted for 'the bricklaying trade' and provided shelters for the needy. Professions changed but the philanthropic concerns remained the same for the demobbed soldier.

In 'The Aerodrome' Heaney remembers the 'Toome Aerodrome' of 1944:

> Toome Aerodrome had turned to local history.
> Hangers, runaways, bomb stores, Nissen huts,
> The perimeter barbed wire, forgotten and gone.
>
> (ll 7-9, 'The Aerodrome', *DC*)

Heaney claims that America and Britain have 'usurped' Ireland 'by 'compulsory order'. Colonial usurpation filtered through the imposition of Allied ideologies on neutral Ireland. The only option for the Irish people was to wait and watch. The political domination of Britain reduced Ireland to inactivity.

Heaney talks about the unpredictable character of the contemporary world in 'Anything Can Happen'. The poem is a version of Horace echoing the attack on WTC on 9/11. Horace (65-8 BC) was a Roman lyricist and satirist, whose works are considered masterpieces of the Golden Age. His chief poetic work *Odes*, Book I, II, III, celebrates peace, patriotism, love, friendship and pleasures in simple country life. In the poem Heaney refers to the coordinated terrorist strike on the World Trade Center, New York on September 11, 2001:

Anything can happen, the tallest towers

Be overturned, those in high places daunted,
Those overlooked regarded. Stropped-beak Fortune
Swoops, making the air gasp, tearing the crest off one,
Setting it down bleeding on the next.

(ll 8-12, 'Anything Can Happen', *DC*)

On the sun-drenched morning of September 11, 2001, 19 terrorist working in teams of four or five hijacked four commercial jetliners and turned them towards WTC. Two of the planes, loaded with fuel and passengers, were flown at full speed into the twin towers. Neil Doyle, the award-winning journalist who specializes in investigating terrorism for national newspapers and broadcasters in UK and overseas, describes the horrible event:

> There it was, right before our eyes, on the TV in the office. A crowd had gathered to watch the giant silver building spewing black smoke and witness Hollywood fiction transform into real life. An ominous black plume was billowing from the north tower of the World Trade Center in New York City. [52]

Thousands of innocent people were killed in the attacks. The whole world felt shaken and insecure. Heaney thinks 'nothing resettles right'. In such global phantasmagoria, the terrorists represent fanatics who have no human compulsions. They turn the world into a waste land where 'Telluric ash and fire-spores boil away'.

Bobby Breen's helmet reminds Heaney of contemporary danger. Breen is presented as a fireman from Boston. In the hazardous job of firefighting, Breen saved many people from the fire. His helmet with 'Tinctures of sweat and hair oil' is an insignia of his hard work. One fine afternoon, Breen presented his 'headgear / Of tribe' to the poet. Heaney finds a parallel between his own ambition to save the world from burning in wars and Breen's service as a fireman:

As if I were up to it, as I had
Served time under it, his fire-thane's shield,

His shoulder-awning, while shattering glass

And rubble-bolts out of a burning roof
Hailed down on every hatchet man and hose man there

(ll 16-20, 'Helmet', *DC*)

The imagery of war and terror has been dealt with in earlier anthologies but the global jurisdiction gives *District and Circle* uniqueness. In the title sequences 'District and Circle', Heaney travels the 'underground' as 'habitués' along 'the dreamy ramparts / Of escalators ascending and descending'. The poet, as a regular visitor is familiar with the subway:

Tunes from a tin whistle underground
Curled up a corridor I'd be walking down
To where I knew I was always going to find

(ll 1-3, Tunes from a tin... 'District and Circle', *DC*)

The poet-visitor passes through the strict surveillance of London underground railway subway. It is also known as the tube. It has about 42 percent underground area. The system serves 275 stations. The strict security system may have been the result of July 7th, 2005 London bombing, in which four bomb explosion struck London during the morning rush hour. Heaney describes the rush and security at the subway:

I re-entered the safety of numbers,
A crowd half straggle-ravelled and half strung
Like a human chain, the pushy newcomers
Jostling and purling underneath the vault

(ll 2-5, Another level down... 'District and Circle poem', *DC*)

Stepping on the train with the other fellow passengers on their way to other destinations represents an experience of sharing:

My back to the unclosed door, the platform empty;
And wished it could have lasted

(ll 9-10, Stepping on to it... 'District and Circle poem', *DC*)

The poet sees a momentary glimpse of his father in his own reflection in the window. His father, a rural Irish farmer, probably never traveled in a modern carriage. In the hustle-bustle of the city life of London, the poet finds the fleeting reflection of his father, soothing:

> My father's glazed face in my own waning
> And craning...
>
> (ll 3-4, So deeper into it...'District and Circle poem', *DC*)

In London he found nothing rural with which he could have feel at home. The split second reflection of his father in the poet's own reflection becomes a moment of epiphany which compensates for his nostalgia. Heaney celebrates it as 'the only relict / Of all that I [Heaney] belong to'. Heaney's concern accentuates the theme of identity which has been dealt with in earlier anthologies.

In the translation of Eoghan poet Rua Ó Súilleabháin instructions to Seamus MacGearailt, the blacksmith, Heaney presents his desire for possessing an instrument for digging. Seamus Heaney has always posed himself as a digger who digs down the layers of history and culture to expose. His digging activity has produced some of his immemorial poems. The instructions have been taken from a letter by an eighteenth century Irish speaking poet Rua Ó Súilleabháin (1748-84) addressed to a blacksmith asking for a perfect tool, shining with no 'trace of hammer to show on the sheen of the blade'.

> Seamus, make me a side-arm to take on the earth,
> A suitable tool for digging and grubbing the ground,
>
> (ll 1-2, 'Poet to Blacksmith', *DC*)

'... digging and grubbing' refers to poet's task of weeding out misrepresentations from literature, history and language. The digger-poet, on receiving the instrument, will write back to relieve the amnesia:

And I'll work with the gang till I drop and never complain.

(ll 8, 'Poet to Blacksmith', *DC*)

The theme of the poem is similar to 'Digging' (*Death of a Naturalist*). The 'spade' and the 'pen' merge into the 'tool'. The contrast between modern and traditional, old and new, music and cacophony is dealt with in 'Midnight Anvil'. Easy connectivity of the new world is diffused through sounds. Barney Devlin in the Northern Ireland hammered 'twelve blows' on the anvil at midnight to herald the millennium. His nephew in Alberta heard them on his cellular phone. The poet caught the beauty of the act and produced a poem:

When Barney Devlin hammered
The midnight anvil
I can still hear it: twelve blows
Struck for the millennium.

(ll 2-5, 'Midnight Anvil', *DC*)

Barney Devlin with his anvil symbolizes the old world, his nephew with 'cellular phone' symbolizes the modern world. The poet combines both in poetry:

And Eoghan Rua
Asking Seamus MacGearailt
To forge him a spade
Sharp, well shaped from the anvil,
And ringing *sweet as a bell.*

(ll 21-25, 'Midnight Anvil', *DC*)

The 'anvil' is forged into 'spade' which in turn rings 'sweet as a bell' to herald in the millennium. The dual consciousness of poet is visible in these lines.

Much of the poetry in this anthology is derived form Heaney's childhood memories. Various childhood anecdotes are retold. 'Sugan' portrays the poet as a child fastening the bundles of hay, being punished by Miss Walls for 'dirty talks' with a friend

Duffy, chewing tobacco in 'A Chow', the long queues on Saturday evenings at 'Loudan's butcher's shop' in The Nod' and the hair-cutting salon of barber Harry Boyle in 'A Clip'. Each poem preserves a memory like a photograph. The memories of innocence are preserved by the adult poet. Thus, they are shadowed with the awareness of lurking danger and the obscure realities:

> Saturday evening too the local B-Men,
> Unbuttoned but on duty, thronged the town,
> Neighbours with guns, parading up and down'
>
> (ll 9-11, 'The Nod', *DC*)

Loudan, the butcher exercised his might on the weak animals whereas the B-Men, the auxiliary B-Special Force of the former Royal Ulster Constabulary exercised it on the 'natives'. The poem delves into the dark depths of human psychology which is responsible for man's inhumanity to man. Following the same mood of anxiety and fear, Heaney remembers 'Ku Klux cape' in 'A Clip' and 'Mennonites', the members of Protestant denomination who emphasized adult baptism and rejected church organization, in the poem 'In Iowa'. Heaney would go to Harry Boyle's shop for 'a clip'. Ku Klux Klan is a White supremacist group and a terror secret society that used violence and murder to promote white supremacist beliefs. The hate group was open to white native Protestant and Blacks, Jews and Roman Catholics who were excluded were targeted with violence and defamation:

> Half sleeveless surplice, half hoodless Ku Klux cape.
> Harry Boyle's one-roomed, old bog-road house
> Near enough to home but unfamiliar:
> What was happened there?
>
> (ll 7-10, 'A Clip', *DC*)

In 'One Christmas Day in the Morning', Heaney presents the fear psychosis of a hounded community:

I felt free as a bird, a Catholic at large in Tommy's airspace.

Yet something small prevailed. My father balked at a word like
"Catholic" being used in company.

(ll 4-6, 'One Christmas Day in the Morning', *DC*)

The image of 'free as bird' contradicts the image of confinement. The Catholic minority in Northern Ireland was cabined, constricted and confined. However, the rendezvous with an old friend whom the poet had not 'met since Anahorish School' transports him into a sense of forgotten freedom and the poet feels 'Catholic at large'. The short flight into freedom counterbalances the painful reality of marginalization and confinement. Concealing the identity to save life is the worst compromise which minorities make.

In the prose poems 'Found Prose', Heaney remembers his 'first sight of school' in 'The Lagans Road' and the arrivals of "the gypsies" in his 'district' in 'Tall Dames'. In 1975 Heaney had published a collection of prose poems *Stations*. 'The Lagans Road' exists geographically near the Lagan River in the eastern Northern Ireland. Heaney delineates the topographical details of the road:

The Lagans roads ran for about three quarters of a mile across an
area of wetlands. It was one of those narrow country roads with
weeds in the middle, grass verges, and high hedges on either side,
and all around it marsh and rushes and little shrubs and birch
trees.

(ll 1-5, 'The Lagans Road', *DC*)

Heaney remembers his first sight of the school and the youngsters playing on the playground. The presence of 'Nissen huts' creates a contemporary sense of violence in the heart of serenity. During the wars shelters known as Nissen huts were steel constructions in the shape of half cylinders. The adult recollections draw a parallel with the emotions of the travellers of Pacific North-west:

> ... Years later,
> when I read an account of how the Indians of the Pacific North-
> west foresaw their arrival in the land of the dead- coming along
> a forest path where other traveller's cast-offs lay scattered on the
> bushes, hearing voices laughing and calling, knowing there was
> a life in the clearing up ahead that would be familiar, but feeling
> at the same time lost and homesick-it struck me I had already
> experienced that kind of arrival.
>
> (ll 14-21, 'The Lagans Road', *DC*)

The ambivalent emotion of experiencing excitement in seeing other children enjoying themselves at play and at the same time being bothered by home sickness is universal childhood experience. Dislodged and colonized peoples experience it recurrently in the adult life. The human race has become so entrenched in atrocities that Heaney needs to relive and reenact his childhood to appreciate the significance of innocence and security. Memories are viewed like pictures in an old album. The poet transcends time zones and returns to the contemporary world with a treasure of forgotten values.

In 'Tall Dames', the arrival of "the gypsies" in Heaney's 'district' adds refreshing colours to the routine life of the people. The gypsies peopled the 'land of Eros'. In Greek mythology, Eros is regarded as the god of love. The gypsies came with the circus and Heaney feels that they are imaginary characters 'out of storytime':

> ... Every time they landed in the
> district, there was an extra-ness in the air, as if a gate had been left
> open in the usual life, as if something might get in or get out.
>
> (ll 23-25, 'Tall Dames', *DC*)

Eros or *libido* is the driving energy of the life instinct in the Freudian frame of psychoanalysis. The implication is that these gypsies were full of energy. The gypsy women in 'unerotic woolen shawls' looked like Yeats' "tall dames" walking in Avalon. In Celtic mythology, it is considered to be the land of the blessed. The gypsies were poor nomads who subsisted through begging. Heaney's imagination raises these nomads to the supernatural level.

The anthology is haunted with memories of dead acquaintances. Heaney fondly remembers his aunt in 'The Lift'. Heaney esteemed her highly. She was a 'Favourite aunt, good sister, faithful daughter'. Her love was so strong that Heaney feels bound to her, years after her demise:

> A lifetime, then the deathtime: reticence
> Keeping us together when together,
> All declaration deemed outspokenness.
>
> (ll 16-18, 'The Lift', *DC*)

He sadly remembers her death:

> Whole requiems at the sight of plants and gardens...
> They bore her lightly on the bier. Four women,
> Four friends- she would have called them girls- stepped in
>
> And claimed the final lift beneath the hawthorn.
>
> (ll 28-31, 'The Lift', *DC*)

He furnishes her with a befitting funeral midst flowers and poetry. After her death, her good deeds and strong relations are immortalized in Heaney's elegy. In *District and Circle* Heaney not only elegizes his filial relations, but also his 'literary relatives'. He remembers poets and writers who have influenced or inspired him.Ted Hughes is remembered in 'Stern'. After the death of Hughes, Heaney mourned 'standing on a pierhead watching him'. Hughes had considered meeting Eliot a very significant experience:

> He said, "it was like standing on a quay
> Watching the prow of the *Queen Mary*
> Come towards you, very slowly."
>
> (ll 4-6, 'Stern', *DC*)

However the bereavement of Hughes makes the reunion difficult for Heaney. He compromises with his imagination. The reality of death puts 'wooden end-stopped stern' in the recollections. Heaney experiences a sense of failure, unable to compensate with recollections in this case. Heaney elegized Milosz in *Electric Light*. He is submerged in the literary debts of the writers he writes about. The memorial poems are Heaney's 'act of thanksgiving' addressed to the Polish writer.

Similar poetic concerns persuade Heaney to acknowledge the Chilean poet and Noble Laureate 1971, Neftali Ricardo Reyes Basoalto (1904-73), who wrote under the pseudonym, Palbo Neruda. Neruda's works evolved through several phases. His poetry ranges from erotic to political. During his exile from 1948 to 1952, he wrote the *Canto General* (1950), an epic poem exploring the struggles of South American people in their fight for freedom. The work also describes the topography and native peoples, fauna and flora, and the ancient Inca and Aztec tribes.

Heaney's poetic concerns are similar to Neruda's. Heaney, like Neruda, is preoccupied with the predicament of his people in particular and the whole world in general. Like Neruda, the natural world is in abundance in Heaney's oeuvres. He also sketches the geography and traces the origins of the ancient Celtic people and of the Iron Age victims through out his poetry. Heaney 'sees with' Neruda's 'eyes':

> O my Palbo of earthlife-
> when I tasted the stuff
> it was freshets and orbs.
> My eyes were on stalks,
> I was back in an old
> rutted cart road, making
> the rounds of the district, breasting
> its foxgloves, smelling
> cow-parsley and nettles, all
>
> (ll 16-24, 'To Palbo Neruda in Tamlaghtduff', *DC*)

Heaney, like Neruda, does 'the round of the district' of familiar farms and rivers, encountering the ghosts and elegizing the dead. The poem is a glowing tribute to Neruda

for his efforts to bring the suffering of his people before the world. It is also an acknowledgement of the influence of Neruda on Heaney whose 'tear-ducts melt down' when he remembers Neruda. Heaney in his collection of essays, comments on his attachment to his land:

> To this day, green, wet corners, flooded wastes, soft rushy bottoms, any place with the invitation of watery ground and tundra vegetation....possess an immediate and deeply peaceful attraction. It is as if I am betrothed to them, and I believe my betrothal happened one summer evening, thirty years ago, when another boy and myself stripped to the white country skin and bathed in a moss-hole, treading the liver-thick mud, unsettling a smoky muck off the bottom and coming out besmeared and weedy and darkened.[53]

Heaney returns to the Tollund man in the sequence 'The Tollund Man in Springtime'. The sequence of six sonnets revivifies the Iron Age victim of sacrificial death. The bog, as the storehouse of past has always been of immense interest to the poet. The bog land, bog oaks and bog bodies contribute to the impressive designs of Heaney's poetry. In the poetic universe of bog bodies Tollund Man occupies his own unique place. Heaney has written about 'Tollund Man' in *North* (1975), about the city 'Tollund' in *The Spirit Level* (1996) and in *District and Circle*, he once again resurrects the Iron Age victim who is 'neither god nor ghost'. He is a human being who was sacrificed by the Iron Age people 'for their own good'. The reference is to the ritual sacrifice to the goddess, for the renewal of the season and for the fertility of crops. The Tollund Man was discovered by two Danish brothers on 8th of May 1950. The title of the poem reverses the fertility ritual. The decayed and unsightly body of the sacrificial victim surfaces in the spring time from an agriculturally productive bog.

Tollund Man returns to the twenty-first century. He experiences alienation and bewilderment as the world has metamorphosed from natural to virtual:

> Into your virtual city. I'll have passed
> Unregistered by scans, screens, hidden eyes,
> Lapping myself in time, an absorbed face

Coming and going, neither god nor ghost,
Not at odds or at one, but simply lost

(ll 1-5, Into your virtual city...'The Tollund Man in Springtime', *DC*)

In the contemporary world, the virtual city is under the strict surveillance of 'scans, screens, hidden eyes'. The security measures in the virtual city have been necessitated by the unpredictable terror attacks. The Tollund Man is amazed to find that the progress has perpetuated greater barbarities. In the Iron Age, he understood the logic of his own death as an essential ritual created by the primeval man attempting to understand the natural phenomena. In contemporary circumstances the terror and violence has resulted in chaos. The world is a place where... 'anything can happen'. He is an 'absorbed face' that is 'simply lost'. The purpose of his resurrection is not for rehabilitation. His 'sixth sense', acquaints him with lurking terror, more irrational and menacing than anything encountered in the Iron Age:

Panicked snipe offshoting into twilight,
Then going awry, larks quietened in the sun,
Clear alteration in the bog-pooled rain.

(ll 12-14, Into your virtual city...'The Tollund Man in Springtime, *DC*)

Tollund Man is now a creature of the natural world. For a long time he was preserved in the bog by nature. The 'Clear alteration' in the natural world makes it difficult for him to feel at home in the civilized contexts of the modern world. The primeval man who died so that mankind may live finds that the world has moved in an entirely different direction.

Caeners in his article, identifies Biblical aspects in the resurrection of the Tollund Man. He refers to the resurrection of the dead as envisioned by prophet Ezekiel:

> The description of his discovery calls to mind the biblical resurrection of the dead as envisioned by the prophet Ezekiel. In the *King James Bible*, Ezekiel 37:2 reads: "And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry." This rings with the poem's comparison of the Tollund Man to sun-

> dried turf. In Ezekiel 37:5 the first step of the actual resurrection is described as follows: "Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live." The "breath of God" is the *conditio sine qua non* for life. Through His breath, God resuscitates the dead and they are made "to come up out of [their] graves.[54]

Caeners further suggests:

> In the words of the Tollund Man himself, his creation went according to the Christian tradition and clearly alludes to Genesis and the creation of Man. The Tollund Man admits to having been "bog-bodied on the sixth day." God made Man on the sixth day and, likewise, the Tollund Man was changed into what he became "on the sixth day." The last line reads: "And on the last, all told, unatrophied." Turned bog body "on the sixth day," the Tollund Man speaks of a return to an "unatrophied" way of being here. The last day when all the history of Man is told refers to Judgement Day, which is, of course, the day when the dead rise from their graves, resurrected to face final judgement for their sins. That this will indeed happen in an "unatrophied" fashion, is prophesied in detail in Ezekiel 37:6: "And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live." In addition to this, the last line of the sonnet, cryptic as it is, also suggests that the discovering and unearthing of the Tollund Man is already perceived as his Judgement Day and, being freed from the bog, he feels "unatrophied." [55]

Caeners is true in his analysis as the Tollund Man is aware of the divine dispensations 'I was like turned in the breath of God', he admits in the sonnet. In sonnet III, he talks about the in-between period when he 'was buried and unburied':

> On show for years while all that lay in wait
> Still waited. Disembodied. Far renowned.
> Faith placed in me, me faithless as a stone
>
> (ll 9-11, My heavy head... 'The Tollund Man in Springtime, *DC*)

Tollund Man's sense of alienation at the museum at Aarhus is articulated and so is his passivity in reciprocating when the poet 'renowned / Faith placed in me'. This

recaptures the mood of the poem 'Tollund Man' from *Wintering Out*, when the poet feels 'Unhappy at home', on the silence of Tollund Man. Heaney says in the poem:

> Something of his sad freedom
> As he rode the tumbrel
> Should come to me, driving,
> Saying the names.
>
> (ll 31-34, 'The Tollund Man', *Wintering Out*, 1972)

Tollund Man is presented as a silent, ancient dead mummy that is unable to respond to the poet's feelings. In the present poem, when the bog body is completely resurrected and can articulate his feelings, he confesses his being 'faithless as a stone'. His silence underscores a sense of guilt. The confession and response from the Tollund Man can serve as a compensation to the 'unhappy' poet.

As the sequence progresses, the Tollund Man seems to do way with his passivity. He wishes to cross the boundaries both of his destiny as a bog body and as a historical object in a 'display case' in the museum. The first hurdle in his way is the history. Quoting Czeslaw that 'The soul exceeds its circumstances', Tollund Man apprehends the amnesias of history. He claims:

> History not to be granted the last word
> Or the first claim...
>
> (ll 2-3, "The soul exceeds its... 'The Tollund Man in Springtime, *DC*)

This articulation of the Tollund Man echoes the concerns of postcolonialism. Edward Said observed that "'the colonized' has since [World War II] expanded considerably to include women, subjugated and oppressed classes, national minorities'[56]. The shared feature of all the marginalized groups is their placement in the relationship to a dominant culture that impinges upon them and seeks to define and silence them. Said further argues, 'to be one of colonized is potentially to be great many different, but inferior things, in many different places, at many times'[57]. Thus, Tollund Man, in the light of Edward Said's observation, seems to be colonized by its fate and history. In the

postcolonial resurrection, he attempts to dehistoricize the history. History is always written from the point of view of the dominant leaving many voids as Fanon claims:

> The settler makes a history; his life is an epoch, an Odyssey. He is the absolute beginning: "This land was created by us"; he is the unceasing cause: "If we leave, all is lost, and the countery will go back to the Middle Ages". Over against him torpid creatures wasted by fevers, obsessed by ancestral customs, form an almost inorganic background for the innovating dynamism of colonial mercantilism.[58]

The silence of Tollund Man or the absence of the challenging voice is an idiosyncratic condition immanent in the indifferences against him. In order to return he 'told' his 'webbed wrists to be like silver birches' and 'old uncallused hands to be young' and 'spade cut skin to heal'. Thus, a complete physical resurrection in which 'the soul exceeds its circumstances'; the Tollund Man gets 'restored / By telling [himself] this'. Caeners thinks that the poet, at this juncture, describes 'an instance of imagination pressing back against the pressure of reality'[59]. Heaney describes his theory of poetry in *The Redress of Poetry* as:

> a tendency to place a counter-reality in the scales – a reality which may be only imagined but which nevertheless has weight because it is imagined within the gravitational pull of the actual and can therefore hold its own and balance out against the historical situation. This redressing effect of poetry comes from its being a glimpsed alternative, a revelation of potential that is denied or constantly threatened by circumstances. [60]

Caeners take the clues from Heaney's theory. He explains:

> The Tollund Man uses his imaginary powers to restore himself again "by telling [himself]" that it is so. In the light of Heaney's theory of poetry, one could say that the Tollund Man turns himself into a counter-reality, thereby gaining new life and a door into the modern world. [61]

With the realization of this 'new revelation of potential', Tollund Man sees that 'sky was new' suggesting new horizons. He smells 'the air, exhaust fumes, silage reek' and hears 'Swarm at roundabout five fields away'. Along with the physical features, the

sensory organs have been restored which goes far away from his 'sixth sense threat' of the previous sonnet. The Tollund Man tries to compromise with his memories of ancient Jutland in order to come to terms with the modern world. In sonnet V, he seems to be 'unlearnable' of the knowledge of 'another world'.

> Of another world, unlearnable, and so
> To be lived by, whatever it was I knew
> Came back to me. Newfound contrariness.
> In check-out lines, at cash-points, in those queues
> Of wired, far-faced smilers, I stood off,
> Bulrush, head in air, far from its lough.
>
> (ll 9-14,Cattle out in rain... 'The Tollund Man in Springtime, *DC*)

Tollund Man has existed with uncomplicated rural wisdom. The 'Newfound contrariness' in his comprehension of the modern world with its 'queues' at 'check-points' and 'cash-points' keeps him suspended between the two worlds. He is unable to return to the old world and powerless to comprehend the modern world. He feels like the 'Bulrush', a waterside plant, which has its 'head in air' and is located 'far from its lough', which is the source of its nourishment. The Tollund Man stands with his mind engaged in the comprehension of modern world and his heart wishing to return to the Iron Age. In the final sonnet, the Tollund man arrives in the 'virtual city'. In the first sonnet he envisions his future arrival and the final sonnet deals with his arrival. He crosses 'every check and scan' with 'a bunch of Tollund rushes-roots and all'. Roots symbolize his original identity and cultural baggage, which is deeply entrenched in Jutland, which he carries in the form of 'Tollund rushes'. Being aware of the circumstances of the modern world, he brings a part of his culture to help him in remaining connected with his original 'roots'. He knows that he cannot a return to the old world. He 'spat on [his] hands' and 'spirited [himself] into the street' suggesting that he was ready to face the modern world. The resurrected Tollund man is not ready to compromise with the 'sad freedom' of his earlier poem 'The Tollund Man'. He compensates for the unhappiness of the poet by breaking his silence. He fulfils the poet's desire by coming out of his passivity in the 'display case' of the museum and actively participating in the twenty-first century.

In the first sonnet, the Tollund Man was unable to adjust to the new world because of its 'Clear alternation' to the old natural order. This refers to the increase in the average temperature of the Earth near surface air and oceans in recent decades and its projected continuation. An increase in global temperature is expected to cause other major changes, including the rise in the level of the sea, increased intensity of extreme weather events, and changes in the amount and pattern of precipitation. The agricultural yields, glacier retreats and extinction of species are some other natural threats of global warming. William D Nordhaus analyzes the impact of global warming:

> Such factors include extreme events such as hurricanes, floods, droughts, and heat waves; the spread of agricultural pests and human diseases; large regional changes in temperature and precipitation; abrupt climate changes; and sea level increases that may be larger than expected because of surprises lurking in glacial dynamics[62]

Heaney, also an ecological poet, has concern for saving the world from natural threats. In the poem 'Hofn', he talks about one such threat:

> The three-tongued glacier has begun to melt
> What willwe do, they ask, when boulder-milt
> Comes wallowing across the deltas flats
>
> And the miles-deep shag ice makes it move?
>
> (ll 1-4, 'In Hofn', *DC*)

The melting of glaciers not only causes landslides, flash floods and overflowing of glacial lakes but it also increases annual variation in the water flow in the rivers. The continued melting would deplete the glacial ice and reduce the runoff that would affect the irrigation of the crops in the areas which are heavily dependent on the water runoff. Among one of the most hazardous threats of the global warming is the impact on the ecosystem. An increase in global temperature would make some species extinct. The death of blackbird in the poem 'The Blackbird of Glanmore' seems to be the result of global warming:

On the grass when I arrive,
Filling the stillness with life,
But ready to scare off
At the very firat wrong move.
In the ivy whrn I leave.

Its you, blackbird, I love.

(ll 1-5, 'The Blackbird of Glanmore', *DC*)

In his efforts to compensate for global warming, Heaney proposes to plant trees. Deforestation is one of the major reasons behind the natural climate. Heaney is a conservationist who knows the importance of trees in the ecological balance of the planet. He makes an appeal to mankind in 'Planting the Alder':

Plant it, plant it
Streel-head in the rain.

(ll 13-14, 'Planting the Alder', *DC*)

Poems such as 'Helping Sarah' and 'Chairing Mary' show his understanding of his responsibilities towards his growing daughter Sarah and ageing wife Mary. Heaney's help at home presents a humane and beautiful aspect of a man who is senstive to family needs:

Heavy helpless, carefully manhandled
Upstairs every night in the wooden chair

(ll 1-2, 'Chairing Mary', *DC*)

Such attitudes are not sanctioned in the patriarchy. Heaney belongs to a new world which understands the equal position of both sexes. He is not 'embarrassed' by the weight of his wife and he is always standing by to help her. He believes in the united family system which is woven with the threads of mutual understanding, unconditional love and help. He is sensitive enough to understand the emotional needs and expectations of love from a father and a husband. In the disintegrating scenario, Heaney's understanding serves as a permanent base.

Conclusion

The four anthologies analyzed in this chapter were published between 1991 and 2006. The influence of the classics can be seen through out Heaney's oeuvre and particularly in his later works. The influence of Dante is visible in *Field Work*, *Station Island* and *Seeing Things*. Virgil's *Eclogues* have been used as a framework in *Electric Light*, Horace's *Odes* figures in *District and Circle*, and Homer's *Odyssey* is referred to in *The Spirit Level*.

The influences, intertextualities and translations widen the dimension of Heaney's poetry. He compromises with influences to widen the domain of Irish literature. Lorna Hardwick claims that 'Classical referents...help both to recreate and to communicate the pain of history. In so doing they can also cauterize the wound, thus enabling regeneration and the growth of a new creativity'[63]. The technique of return-memory-retrieval-vision is followed recurrently in the four anthologies and especially in *The Spirit Level, Electric light* and *District and Circle*. The return suggests the desire to flee from the agony of present world to childhood memories and retrieves more than he consciously remembers.

The anthologies are visionary. Heaney embellishes his poems with saintly presence. In The *Spirit Level* St. Kevin and Jesus Christ appear. Both symbolize the virtue of self sacrifice. The journeyman tailor becomes Buddha of Banagher. The references to Lourdes, and the pilgrimage site of St. Bernadette in France and the philosophy of love, harmony universal brotherhood preached by the Stoic Heraclitus in *Electric Light* suggest that Heaney propagates peace and harmony through his poetry. Although the poems are cluttered with references to wars ranging from the ancient war of Troy, World War II, Balkan Wars, the pogrom of Jews, the civil wars to the contemporary terror attacks on the twin towers. Through the portrayal of the war-ridden world, he wishes to bring home the horrors of wars and the apathy of man for man.

Heaney's poetry has moved from the domains of nationalism and has incorporated the concerns and vision of the whole world. He seems to be aware of the

cultural diversity of globalization. Irish problems have never been removed from his consciousness. However Heaney acknowledges the Irish historical experience.

Heaney, through his poetry, wishes to compensate for the political wrongs done to his people. In Heaney's scheme of things, the eastern European writers such as Czeslaw Milosz, Zbigniew, from Poland and Joseph Brodsky from Russia hold a special place. It can also be said that he acknowledges the contribution of non-native writers to literature. He writes poetry in to commemorate these writers and frequently dedicates his poems to other writers such as Nadine Gordimer, Ted Hughes, and Patrick Kavanagh, and refers to Thomas Hardy, Auden, and Shakespeare.

Apart from acknowledging the literary masters, Heaney also, associates himself with people from the lower strata of society. He elevates these blue-collar types and glorifies their skills. The journeyman tailor of Banagher of 'At Banagher', the yardman of 'Whit-sur-Moyala', the bricklayer of 'Damson' (*The Spirit Level*) and the milker of 'Monatana'(*Electric Light*), are considered with affection and appreciation.

In these anthologies, Heaney deals with a number of people with handicaps. He deals with this less explored field in literature. He shows how these physically challenged people become the 'other' of the society because of the indifference of people. He also appreciates the will power and uncompromising courage of the people who stand out against all the odds with their own identity in the faceless, numberless crowd. His endeavour is to compensate for the wrongs done to these people through his poetry.

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Q. and A. come back. They "Formed my mind."
"Who is my neighbour?" "My neighbour is all mankind."

-Ten Glosses, *Electric Light.*

Conclusion

The end of art is peace.

Encarta Encyclopedia, Oxford Scientific Films

Conclusion

Heaney's poetry mirrors the plight of the marginalization of Irish people and the impact of colonization on the culture, traditions, identity, language and economy of Northern Ireland and throws into relief the attitude of hegemonic societies. His negotiations are based around the binaries of metropolis/periphery, self/other, colonizer/colonized, England/Ireland. The major impact of centuries of colonization on Ireland has been the fragmentation of the Irish identity. Despite the noble veil of cultural and moral missions, one of the basic motives of colonial enterprise is economic.

Heaney, with the use of these postcolonial strategies, dismantles the hegemony. Heaney opts to be a 'digger' who digs through the layers of history, literature, culture and language to expose the truth. As a 'digger' he digs down the layers of history, language and literature of his own nation to find that English literature is filled with misrepresentations of Irish people and that Irish language is looked down upon and that history is are full of amnesia.

The desire and need for a single reliable version of the past, the rehabilitation of Irish identity and redemption of Irish dignity are the missions of Heaney. He re-writes history and scrutinizes the misrepresentations of Irish culture and traditions in hegemonic records. Heaney rewrites history through his poetry. Heaney seems to be preoccupied with the notion of digging. In the very first poem of the first anthology *Death of a Naturalist* (1966) he makes his agenda clear. He announces that would 'dig' through the layers of memory, history and literature. In the first anthology *Death of a Naturalist* (1966), in the first poem 'Digging', the fragmentation of individual as well as community identity is a major theme. Owing to this inheritance of loss the poet could not follow his 'spade' or farming tradition of his family and turns to the'pen'. He compromises with and breaks the long hard-labour tradition of his family and decides consciously to 'dig' with the pen. To settle for peace, he makes sociological compromises by not advocating 'gun' against 'gun'. The theme of 'digging' and 'exposing' continues throughout his poetry. In

the latest anthology *District and Circle*, he asks the blacksmith to make a suitable tool for digging 'Poet to Blacksmith'.

Heaney 'digs' through his childhood memories and returns to the familiar and filial world of childhood to renew his vision. The memories of childhood are retrieved from and analyzed with the scrutiny if adult vision. Childhood is a time of deep faith. Children believe in the goodness of the world. As one grows older and encounters other aspects of human nature and experience the faith in the goodness of the world gets frayed. The bruised, adult poet returns to childhood through his poetry. This regressive journey has a healing touch. The use of autobiographical elements in postcolonial writings is a process of recreation of the original identity. Much of Heaney's oeuvre derives its raw materials from the childhood memories. The re-entry is for gaining a renewed vision which will be an amalgamation of innocence and experience.

Memories and recollections in Heaney's poetry do not just reflect individual consciousness but also incorporate the plight of the nation as well as the whole world. Memory and imagination, for Heaney, are compensatory faculties through which he converts absence into presence, cultural vacuum and fragmented self into dignity. He sees himself as the custodian and celebrant of lost culture, forgotten history and diminishing heritage. Heaney's poetry is for the cause of rehabilitating the culture and traditions, manners and morals, language and identity and history and politics of Northern Ireland. His negotiations are pleas for reconciliations and peace.

In the anthologies which Heaney published in the later phase of his career such as *The Spirit Level* (1996), *Electric Light* (2001) and *District and Circle* (2006), the childhood memories are littered with the imagery of the World War II and the wars of contemporary times. In 'A Sofa in the Forties' (*SL*), 'Polish Sleeper' and Anahorish 1944' (*DC*) the poet remembers the impact of World War II, in 'Known World' (*EL*) the ethnic cleansing of Balkan region is recalled and in 'Anything can Happen' (*DC*), the terror strike of 9/11 is projected. The shocking and shameful violation and torturous and traumatic violence compelled the poet to write about the absolute degradation of

mankind. Heaney's concerns widen with the encapsulation of the problems of the world. His poetry moves from the domain of 'parochialism' to 'universalism'. Heaney has always stood for universal brotherhood and for a free and independent world which is not fragmented by the evil force of caste, creed, and colour. Through his vision, he compensates for hatred and breaks down the walls that divide the world. He struggles for to bring global harmony. He propagates the sustenance of a noble system and standards of justice, peace, harmony and truth.

Identities are deeply rooted in culture. They emerge out of cultural history. In the postcolonial era, the role of culture in the construction of identity has become significant. Colonialism is responsible for manipulating, fracturing, imposing and negating the identities of the natives. The stripping of identity occurred at individual as well as community levels. The experience of colonization, with all its harmful manifestations, is shared by all colonies of the world. Postcolonialism restores the right of every individual on this earth. Hence in a postcolonial text the question of identity is recurrent within the frame and space of representation. The original identity of rural Ireland was threatened by colonialism. The figure of the father becomes a kind of signifier for the fractured identity of 'Everyman' in rural Ireland. In 'Follower' and 'Digging', the image of the father becomes a signifier for the dilapidating original rural Irish identity. He has a desire to follow his father but is unable to do so. Hence he compensates through memories and recollections. He returns to his own childhood and native place in his memory. Restoration of the social and original identity is one of the concerns of Heaney's poetry.

He evokes his original rural identity through out his poetic career. Identity is inherited with the traditions and culture. Heaney experiences comfort in the rural belongings. He loves fodder in 'Fodder' (*DD*) and celebrates the Irish hearth in 'Keeping Going' (*SL*), rejoices in his culture in 'From the Canton of Expectation (*HL*). The impact of cultural domination of the colonizers on the Irish culture is central to the poem 'Oysters'. In *Field Work* (1979) food and drinks are represented as a part of a culture. Food contributes to the construction of cultural narratives. The poet, unable to compensate for the subjugation of Irish culture, feels angry.

The desire to engineer his own identity persuades Heaney to recollect the pieces of rural identity through the description of the agricultural and rural landscape in 'The Barn' (*DN*). He explains that the purpose of his poetry is 'to pry into roots' in order to set 'the darkness echoing' in the poem 'Personal Helicon' (*DN*). Heaney recreates the old forgotten Ireland in all its myriad splendour in the poem 'The Diviner' (*DN*). Heaney revitalizes the old Ireland which had been blurred by the dominance of colonization. The diviner becomes a symbol of his community. Similarly the poet promotes the notion of attachment to his community and compensates the loss with the rehabilitation of real Ireland through his poetry.

In the process of rehabilitating of rural identity, the poet glosses rural skills in *Door into the Dark* (1969). Rural trades were over shadowed by the glitter of industrialization. Heaney praises the skills of the roof-maker in 'Thatcher' and of the blacksmith in 'The Forge'. In the decaying order the rural craftsmen symbolize the secluded spaces where they continue to survive. Heaney, as compensation, provides them with a proper literary space by praising them in his poetry. Similarly the Croppies, the historically muted victims of the hegemonic records have been remembered and given a proper literary space in Heaney's poem 'Requiem for Croppies'. Heaney lends his voice to these silenced subalterns, so, that they can expose the wrongs done to them and fills the voids of historical amnesia. The postcolonial writers across the globe have embarked on the task of re-representing the colonial period in their writings. Writers such as George Lamming, Chinua Achebe, Wilson Harris and V.S Naipaul have attacked the hegemony of the Empire.

Heaney removes the noble veil of enlightenment from the civilization mission of the colonizers. He talks about the real economic exploitations of native resources in 'A Lough Neagh Sequence' and 'The Plantation'. For the redemption of Irish pride, the Irish people will look back into the history in the 'bottomless' center of 'Bogland'. The bog preserves the past which the colonizers tried to distort. The poem 'Bogland' becomes a manifesto for the bog poems of coming anthologies. The first bog body to emerge from the bog, is Tollund Man. The local murder of a young Catholic is woven with the

sacrificial death penalty of the Iron Age Victim. Heaney's failures in making the bog body reciprocate to his appeal and failure in compensating for the murder of the young Catholic, unleashes waves of unhappiness. The Tollund Man becomes a heralder of other bog bodies.

The Tollund Man makes his reappearance in 'The Tollund Man in Springtime' in DC. Tollund Man returns to the contemporary world of 21st century where he experiences sense alienation as the world has metamorphosed from natural to virtual. The resurrected Tollund man in springtime is not ready to compromise with the 'sad freedom' of his earlier poem 'The Tollund Man'. He compensates for the unhappiness of Heaney by breaking his silence. He fulfills the poet's desire by coming out his passivity from the 'display case' of the museum and actively participating in the 21st century.

The main impetus behind the bog poems was the P.V. Glob's *The Bog People*. In *North* (1972), Heaney resurrects the ancient bodies. The bogs have been silent witnesses to atrocities wreaked upon generations of the Iron Age people. Hidden in its depth were the dark secrets of human history that were unearthed by the 'digger' Seamus Heaney. One of the vital concerns of postcolonialism is the search for truth. Heaney investigates their stories in order to establish an amnesia free perspective. He resurrects and returns their voice so they can tell their stories to the whole world. He gives them literary space in his poetry like any other thing of beauty. The Grauballe Man, The Tollund Man, The Windeby girl, and the Bog Queen, return from the Iron Age to tell their stories. In 'The Bog Queen', the compensation transcends any ordinary compensation; Heaney exhibits erotic passion for the corpse of the girl. In 'Punishment', Heaney suffers from guilt for compromising with silence, for just being a silent observer and for his failure to stop the vengeance of IRA.

Postcolonialism is a process of resistance and reconstruction. As resistance to the hegemony Heaney evokes the historical, political, linguistic and cultural genocide of the Ireland in *Wintering Out* (1972). He talks about the linguistic colonization of Ireland in 'Midnight' by equating the disappearance of Irish language with wolf hunting in Ireland

and in 'Tradition', where he claims that the 'guttural muse' was bullied by the 'alliterative traditions' of English. Heaney compensates for the bullying through the mention of Leopald Bloom to claim compensation through literature for stereotyping and branding Irish people as 'other' in the colonial English literature. Edmund Spender and Shakespeare, for Heaney, were the masters who misrepresented Irish people in their works. One of the concerns of the postcolonialism is to critically analyze the representations of natives as 'other' in a colonial text. The natives have always been presented in negative shades in the works of colonizers. In 'Stations of the West' (*S*), the poet is unable to compensate emotionally to the loss of Gaelic language in the Gaeltacht region. Heaney also compensates for the linguistic hegemony of English through poems such as 'Anahorish', 'Fodder', 'Toome' and 'Broagh' of Irish '*dinnseanchas*'. It is a tradition about the sounds of a word, its pronunciation and usage, and the people who use it.

The relationship between Ireland and England is like the relationship between a victim and a rapist. Poems such as 'Ocean's Love to Ireland' and 'Act of Union' present the marginalization of Irish civilization through the forceful imposition of masculine strength of England over Ireland. The psychological scars of colonial neurosis are dealt with in the poems. Heaney exposes the real motives behind the White man's burden. In 'Orange Drums, Tyrone, 1966', Heaney exposes the divide and rule policy of Orangism which created divisions among the Protestants and Catholics in *Stations* (1975). The sectarian violence and the ideological divisions are dealt with in 'July' which carries forward the theme of psychological pressure on the minority community by the Protestants through the Orange Drums parade. However the position of the speaker-poet is somewhat compromised with the awareness of his being of the minority community and hence no endeavour is made for compensations in the poem. The parades remind the poet of their defeat. The poet feels like a 'double agent' among the political big concepts in 'England's Difficulty' suggesting the colonial politics of divisions between the unionists and nationalists. His prayer is for a peaceful society where the world is not choked with blood and gore and decaying dead bodies.

Heaney is never ready to surrender to the colonial oppression but his plight is that there is no body to share his nationalistic consciousness in 'Toome Roads' (*FW*). In the elegies written for the people who were killed in the contemporary violence his attitude is sympathetic. The elegies, such as 'The Strand at Lough Beg' and 'Causality', discuss no plan for revenges or retaliations. Heaney believes in peaceful compromises rather than revenges. He advocates peaceful compromises and suggests combating violence through non-violence, as done by the apostles of peace like M.K Gandhi, Mother Teresa and Nelson Mandela.

Heaney deals with the themes of parental indifference and unsupervised childhood in poems such as 'Blackberry-Picking' (*DN*), 'The Railway Children' (*SI*). The impact of colonial violence was there in every aspect of Irish life. The Irish children left unsupervised gained premature knowledge of sex. Heaney's poetry brings these conditions before the world. Through his futuristic vision Heaney believes that things will change with the education of Irish children in 'From the Canton of Expectation' (*HL*). He provides the deprived children with hope of a better future. He believes that the properly supervised and educated child can utilize his caliber in re-structuring and re-shaping the world. It was the concern for the importance of education that made Heaney joins hand with Ted Hughes to bring out co-authored works such as *The Rattle Bag* and *The School Bag.* Thus, Heaney compensates for the failure of the society in shaping the lives of the deprived Irish children.

Colonization has many manifestations in postcolonialism. The exercise of power by the dominant over the weak can also be termed as colonization in postcolonial terminology. Thus, the 'other' of the society can be the 'weak'. The theme of paternal rejection is dealt with in 'Limbo', where the mother drowns her illegitimate child, 'Bye-Child (*WO*), deals with a dumb boy, whose mother was indifferent to him because of his disabilities, 'Ugolino', where Heaney blames the father for the death of his children. 'Station Island' is peopled with the ghosts of 'inhabitants of actual Irish world' known to Heaney personally or writers through their works. There is a journey through Irish literature, through the poetry of Sweeney to the prose of William Carleton to James Joyce

and finally to Heaney himself. Dante is exemplary for Heaney as both of them reanalyzed and re-imagined traditions. The confessional self-reflexive writing of Heaney shows that deep in his heart he is conscious of the guilt of his dumbness and wants to provide compensations and compromises through his poetry. These confessions are the compromises which he makes to himself, to unburden his heart, to compensate for the loss and to cleanse his soul in the hypothetical purgatory.

Heaven is a place of blessings, glad tidings and the rewards and compensations of the sufferings in the earthly life whereas hell is a place of punishment where there are no compromises. Purgatory is a place where there is some possibility of transformation through repentance which can cleanse the soul. Heaney as a noble soul concerned with the betterment of his people in the life hereafter as well. Hence he wishes them to see in the purgatory.

Heaney is sensitive to the psychology of the whole humanity. Heaney peoples his poetry with- men, women and children, young and old, farmers and soldiers, saints and gods. He paints the canvas of his poetry with the people living in different and contradictory worlds. He outlines the compromises and adjustments that people have to make to understand the 'other'. With the presentation of two different worlds of binary oppositions- the rural and military, 'The Visitant' (*S*) suggests the adjustments and compromises which both have to make in order to understand the 'other'. In 'Guttural Muse' (*FW*) he depicts that the morals of older generation has not to be despised. There seems to be no compensation for the loss of human values. Modernization has increased the generation gap. The older generation feels outcast, unable to come to terms with the new generation. The loss of human values is always a primary concern for Heaney. In 'Singer's House' (*FW*), he wishes that the singer's voice would compensate for the loss of refinement. The poem carries the emblem of hopes and possibilities. In 'The Otherside' (*WO*), certain ideologies of a particular sect gain colonial dimensions and force the neighbours to be indifferent to each other.

Heaney pleads for the revival of a value-based vision which will encompass all humanity. The 'others' of the society may be physically challenged people, women, the people from the lower strata of society, unlettered rustics or the colonized natives. Heaney as compensation, presents the dumb boy of 'Bye-child' (*WO*), praises the stamina of the epileptic brother in 'Keeping Going' (*SL*), praises the will power of wheel chaired women in 'Field of Vision' (*ST*) and acknowledges the firm determination of blind neighbour-singer in 'At the Wellhead' (*SL*). Societies often fail them and misjudge their potentials and promises because of some preconceived notions. A revised and renewed vision will serve as a compensation for their long, deprived position. Looking through the lens of post colonialism, the weak often become the colony of the strong- women in patriarchy turn out to be colony of men, the unprivileged become the colony of the privileged. Heaney, as a post colonial poet takes up the task of reclaiming the rights of all humanity.

Heaney's poetry is of visions. He seems to believe that the concrete realties of the world are established on the foundation of visions. M.K Gandhi had a vision of free India, Parnell had a vision of free Ireland and beside them there are thousand of unsung heroes, who remained anonymous, but who were endowed visions to make the society a better place. Heaney too, joins the bandwagon, with his vision of a better Ireland. He appeals to humanism for a renewed vision of the society. He returns to his roots to revive society

Writers such as Spenser and Shakespeare wrote for the imperial court and glorified the royal family. Heaney seems to subvert the strategy and weaken the dominance of the hegemony on the literary canon. He glorifies rural Ireland in his poetry and praises the people who are associated with the land. The miker of 'Montana' (*EL*), the journeyman tailor of 'At Bangher', the yardman of 'Whit-sur-Moyola' and the bricklayer of 'Damson'(*SL*), the gypsies of 'Tall Dames' and the blacksmith of 'Midnight Anvil' (*DC*) all are glossed in poetry. The appreciations serve as a redress to these people.

The 'Glanmore Sonnets' (*FW*) mark his move from the violence-ridden Belfast to peaceful environs of Co. Wicklow. He moved to the serene environment to refresh his poetic imagination and to compensate for the chaos of violence-ridden Belfast. Heaney wishes to spread the values of love and peace which he learned in the natural world. He revisits Glanmore in 'Glanmore Revisited' (*ST*) and turns to the place again in 'Glanmore Eclogue' (*EL*). The move to the rural world can be regarded as compensatory.

Heaney rehistorizes and localizes mythologies and chronicles to suit the circumstances of Northern Ireland. Through these stratagies, the poet frames a moral and political critique of violence. The sectarian violence of Northern Ireland, ranging from Irish genocide from by Saxon oppressors, famine victims to the political divisions of Northern Ireland is discussed. Heaney gives his own version of history and mythology. He juxtaposes the past and the present in his poems. 'Antaeus' (*DN*), 'Hercules and Antaeus' (*N*), 'Ugolino' (*FW*), 'The Stone Verdict' (*HL*), 'The Golden Bough' (*ST*), 'Mycenae Lookout' (*SL*), 'Sonnets from Hellas' (*EL*) etc. amalgamate the contemporary scenario with the past.

The influence of the great masters of the past such as Dante, Wordsworth, Eliot and Larkin can be located in Heaney's works. He adopts and adapts their works to suit his context. The influences and intertextualities persist in his work. He invokes Homer and Hugh MacDiarmuid, quotes from the works written of Dante, Homer and Milosz, resurrects Aeshylus and Virgil, translates Martin Sorescu, Rilke and Eoghan Rua and cites the example of Hans Memling, pays reverence to Osip Mandelstam, Ted Hughes and Eliot and alludes to James Joyce and other poets.

Heaney transcends the frontiers of a national literature and creates the world literature for which these intertextualities, influences and translations are indispensable. His poetry will serve as a literal compensation to the Irish people who were misrepresented in the literature produced by the hegemony. Heaney deploys a postcolonial tactic of softening the supremacy of the English literature.

The wish fulfillment of being with the dear ones is achieved through the compensations of memories in the sequences 'Clearance', 'The Wishing Tree' and 'The Stone Verdict' of *The Haw Lantern* (1987), in the imaginary encounters with the familiar ghosts in *Station Island* (1984). . Heaney subsumes the immortality of the soul and hopes for celestial compensations. His poetry crosses the boundaries of death. He never contemplates his own death. His own death never seems to trouble him in the elegies he writes. Heaney celebrates his relationship with the deceased family members and acquaintances. Heaney has always remained emotionally involved with the familiar and filial. Family bonds are vital in his life. As a filial compensation he recollects and commemorates his relatives in the elegies. The transfigured memories identify significant adult consciousness in childhood memories and certain childish aspects in adult behaviour.

Heaney's poetry is for all of mankind in its holistic magnitude, prospective of peace as the ultimate destiny which is the inscrutably sacred, inalienably sublime and integrally woven with the examples of virtues of saints and Christ. In the contemporary dehumanized world, Heaney harks back to the value-laden jurisprudence and spiritual paradigms which will cure the ills of humanity. The perception of Heaney expresse the jurisprudential values more than the legal jurists.

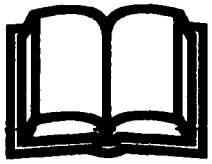
The current vices and threats to the human race are voiced through poetry. The scientists across the world are trying hard to warn the people of the natural calamity of global warming, Heaney too, as an ecologist, presents the threat of global warming in *District and Circle*. In 'Hofn' and 'The Blackbird of Glanmore' he presents the impact of the natural threat and suggests the cure through planting of trees in 'Planting the Alder'. Heaney is aware of the gender bias against the girl child. Heaney exhibits a concern for the marginalization of girls and desires for them. His reassurance is a redress against the gender politics still prevalent in many parts of the world.

Heaney's poetry is against all such divisions. He dreams of a healthy society sans the narrow division. He pleads for compromises, ask for compensations, stands for the

abolition of the divisions, so, that humanity can come to term with itself and live peacefully.

Take hold of the shaft of the pen.
Subscribe to the first step taken
from a justified line
into the margin.

The first Gloss, ***Stations Island***



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